PS2 › GAMECUBE › PC › XBOX › GAME BOY ADVANCE › PSONE

BIOHAZARD: the perfect survival horror

RES EVIL ON CUBE PLAYED TO DEATH

5 TO WIN!

CUBE SPECIAL

EVERYTHING you need to know

• Miyamoto talks to CVG! • Reviews, previews, add-ons and news! • Exclusive Mario Sunshine, Golf & Tennis pictures!

computer and video games

TRIPLE H RIPS YOUR LUNGS OUT IN...

WWF RAW

Xbox's mega-violent grappler kicks SmackDown in the nuts

LOOK UNDER HERE FOR MORE CVG EXCLUSIVES!

FIRST PICS!

LARA ON PS2

The top-heavy Tomb Raider is back from the dead

CVG EXCLUSIVE

KER-POW!

PS2 Spider-Man looks as good as the movie

LOOK AT THIS LOT! ONIMUSHA 2 • VIRTUA FIGHTER 4 • COUNTER-STRIKE • BRITNEY • DEUS EX • 2002 FIFA WORLD CUP • BLOOD OMEN 2 • JEDI KNIGHT II • V-RALLY 3 • LMA MANAGER 2002

£2.80 • ISSUE 246 • MAY

WALKERS Snacks

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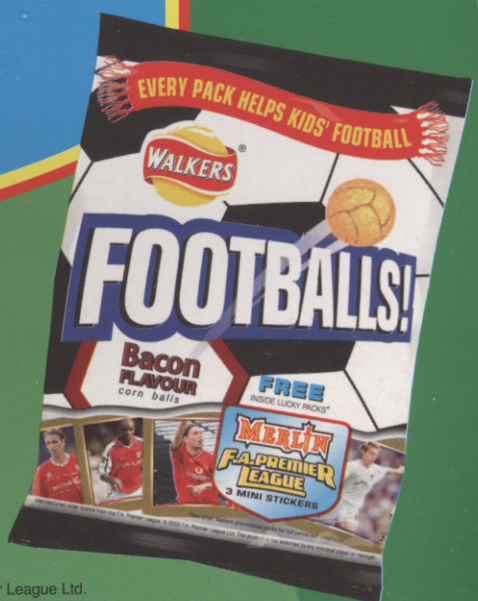

Available in packs of Walkers Snacks

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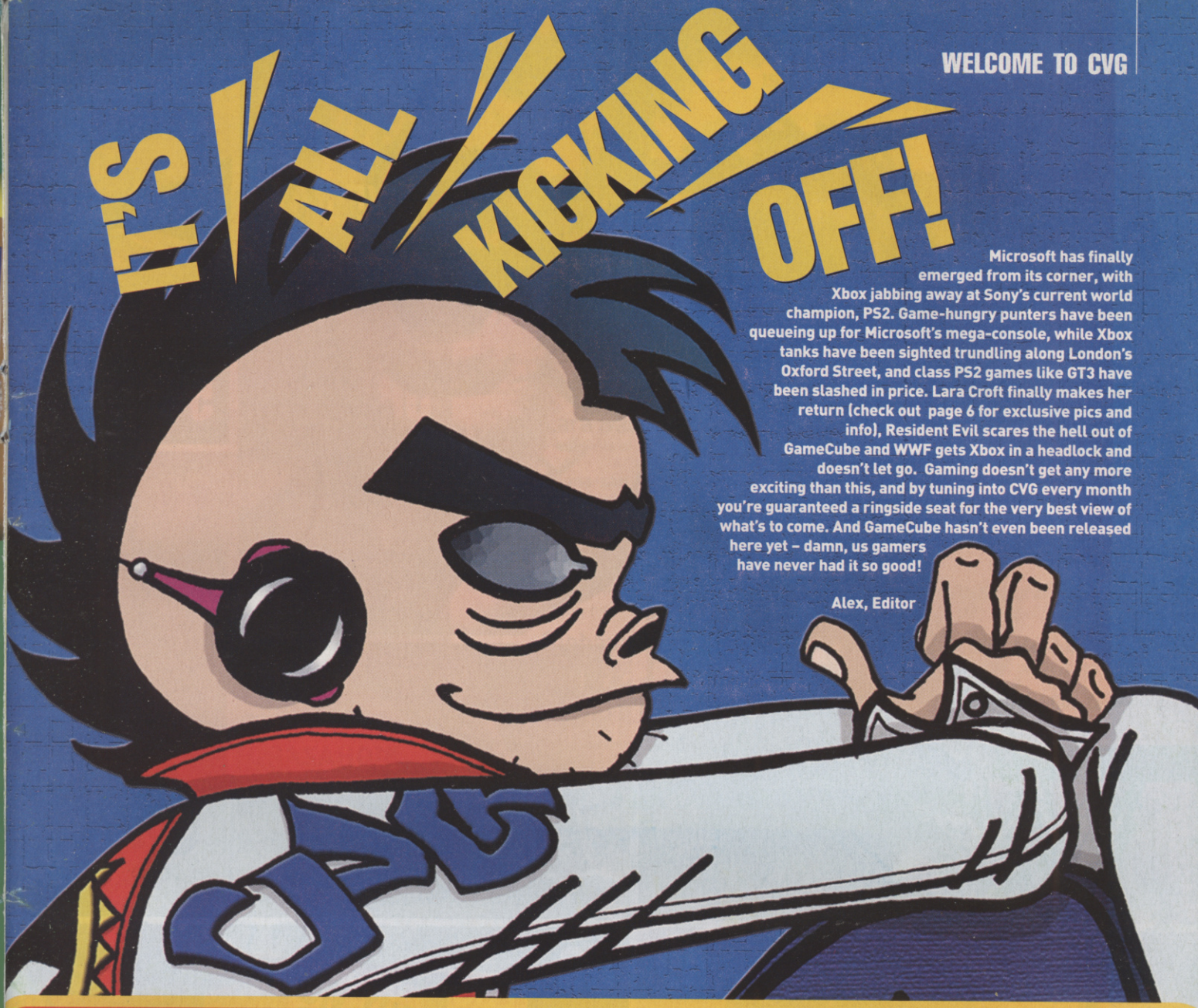
IT'S ALL KICKING OFF!



Microsoft has finally emerged from its corner, with Xbox jabbing away at Sony's current world champion, PS2. Game-hungry punters have been queueing up for Microsoft's mega-console, while Xbox tanks have been sighted trundling along London's Oxford Street, and class PS2 games like GT3 have been slashed in price. Lara Croft finally makes her return (check out page 6 for exclusive pics and info), Resident Evil scares the hell out of GameCube and WWF gets Xbox in a headlock and doesn't let go. Gaming doesn't get any more exciting than this, and by tuning into CVG every month you're guaranteed a ringside seat for the very best view of what's to come. And GameCube hasn't even been released here yet – damn, us gamers have never had it so good!

Alex, Editor

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- ☑ We stick to the same high standards in reviewing games we've always been famous for
- ☑ We get the same buzz out of great games we've always had
- ☑ You'll see the best games on all formats, first
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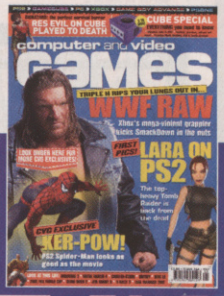

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Crazy Chase
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PLANET CVG

THE HOTTEST GAMES & GOSSIP FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

New Lara, New Attitude

LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER: THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS

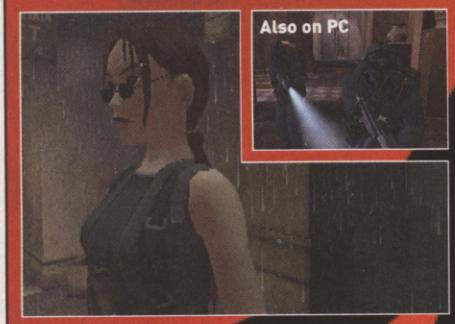
Feared killed after being trapped in a tomb (of all things), our Lara has of course resurfaced for a new adventure. CVG was there to witness the resurrection.

Yes, she's back, looking way, way better than before. With PS2 and the latest PC hardware behind her, this powerful new Lara hits the streets running on 15th November. We're sorry to say that no GameCube or Xbox version has been announced though. On console, the new Lara is a PS2 exclusive, the only console you'll find a visual spectacle 10 times more gobsmacking than before, based on a gameplay and graphics engine written from scratch.

Her new challenge is named Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The Angel Of Darkness, and is promised to be more sinister than previous games. Developer Core Design says it has abandoned simple notions of good versus evil, and seems to be headed in the direction of Acclaim's Shadow Man or Konami's Silent Hill series in terms of unsettling drama.

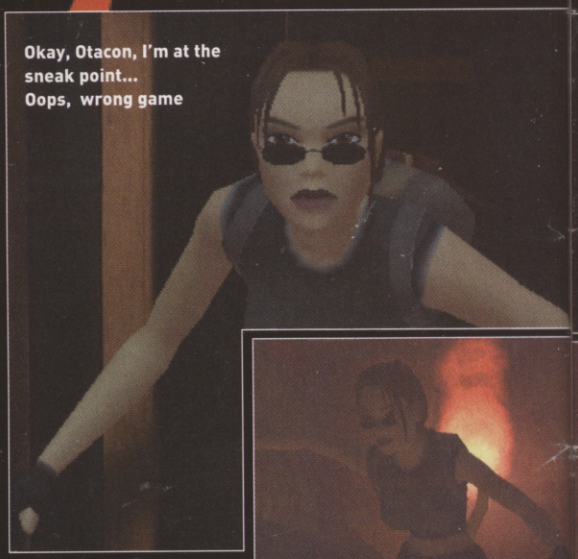
For the first time Core Design has employed a professional scriptwriter, Murti Schofield, to develop the story. Now it has a fully realised universe for Lara and all supporting characters. Every person and every place has a history that interlocks intelligently, against the backdrop of the first few chapters of a story that we will see develop in future games.

To compliment this mature direction the mechanics of the game are also advanced. Lara's actions must now be more carefully considered, as they dictate what happens to



Also on PC

Her T-shirt doesn't go see-through. Maybe on PS3



Okay, Otacon, I'm at the sneak point... Oops, wrong game

➲ It's been a long wait but Lara's looking good!

NEW NINTENDO HANDHELD

Mini Me!

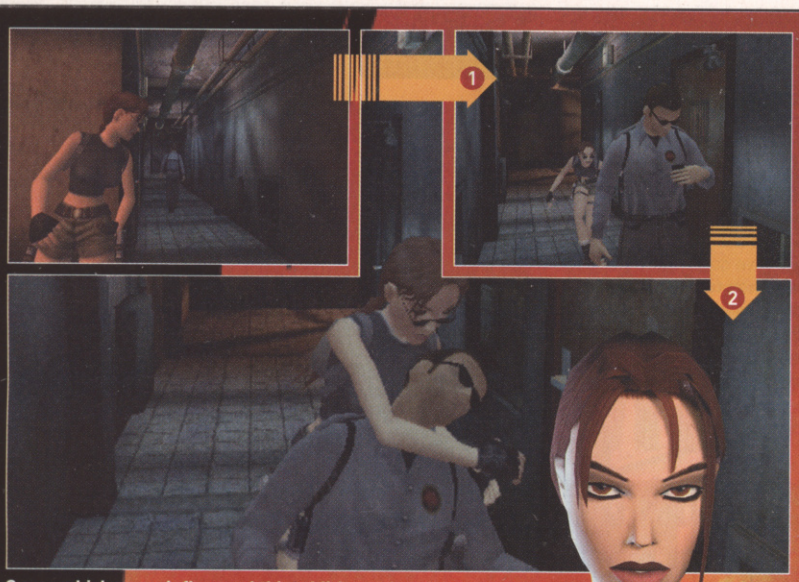
Xbox blitzed onto the UK gaming scene on March 14 with celebrity-filled parties, and free rides home in limousines. Nintendo retaliated on March 15 by hiccupping up its titchy new Pokemon mini. Er, nice one.

With its black and white display and simplistic games, the new handheld has more in common with a digital watch than a GBA. It's expensive for what it is too (the mini costs £40 and games cost £15), but it's sure to find a place in the hearts of Pokemon-obsessed kids. We ain't totally convinced though...

Pokemon Adv

NEXT GEN GBA SHOTS

Your new hero has crazy white hair, or is it a hat?



Guess which game influenced this addition to Lara's repertoire...

her further into the adventure. You choose the path Lara takes, good or bad. During conversations with other characters, Lara can choose to be "nasty, nice or indifferent", according to Jeremy Heath-Smith, MD of Core Design. Players will help Lara discover who to believe and who to trust.

The show reel premiered on 20 March in London included a few minutes of luscious in-game footage. The atmospheric visual effects are easily on a par with MGS2, and the character animation for Lara is hugely improved. Game mechanics have also found new depths.

On the surface this might seem to be more of the same from Lara. However we are confident that as far as this horror-themed Tomb Raider is concerned, the devil is in the detail. We know that Core is keeping secret some spectacular acrobatic routines, hopefully to rival those of Raiden in MGS2 and Dante in Devil May Cry. That being the case, E3 can't come soon enough.

Soul Calibur 2's Cutting Edge

While we're busy fretting over what's best out of Tekken or Virtua Fighter (see page 54), looks like Soul Calibur 2 could cut them both down to size.

Apart from "God Almighty!", words fail us

Players got to grips with Namco's latest arcade fighter for the first time on February 23 at the AOU show in Tokyo. These screenshots from the arcade version show how the series has improved visually since 1999's Soul Calibur on Dreamcast. We can't wait to start practising with new characters Phan Tsung Yung, Tarim and Cassandra

There are bruisers and there's Astaroth

Cassandra lets Nightmare have it

Alexandra. There'll also be two new gameplay additions to master: 'Avoid' and 'Break'.

Home versions are planned for PS2, Xbox and GameCube, to appear this autumn. We'll be playing the arcade version much sooner than that, however. Expect an in-depth report within the next couple of issues!

v ance Stuns The World!

They're coming! Nintendo has released the first ever screens of Pokemon for Game Boy Advance. Okay, so they don't look that hot, especially when compared to the lushness of Golden Sun and Warioland 4, but look close and you'll notice reflections, real-time shadows and even little ripples as your new Pokehero walks through puddles.

There's no news of how the battle screens have been spruced up, nor is there confirmation of just how many of the little critters will be in the final game. We reckon there'll be at least another 100 though, taking the tally up to 351. One thing's for sure, it's bound to be one heck of a gaming challenge, but will anyone care by the time the game comes out over here?

With graphics this plain, it better play like a gem

Grave On!

Acclaim has run into hot water after proposing to advertise Shadowman: 2econd Coming on gravestones.

Of course, controversy is exactly what Acclaim wants but it still says its intention is genuine: to pay relatives cash sums for allowing the headstones of loved ones to be used as advertising sites for the game.

Standing by the proposal, Acclaim's PR manager Shaun White said: "Advertising has changed a lot. The fact that people have given us permission to do it makes it legitimate."

Falling into Acclaim's trap, Tim Morris of the Institute Of Burial And Cremation Administration, said he was "saddened"...

Who'd want one of these? Well, Les, maybe...

NEWS SHORTS

Sign up now for BTopenworld's Games Domain Online Championships 2002. The contest will include football (FIFA 2002), FPS shooters (Return To Castle Wolfenstein and Counter-Strike) and chess (Speed Chess), for a total prize pot of over £20,000. More info at www.gamesdomain.co.uk

Hidden & Dangerous 2 may be more hidden than you think. The team is going all out to finish Mafia for the end of April, so H&D2 will have to wait. Meanwhile the original H&D is being released on Take Two's budget label, bugs fixed, and the whole game's powered by the H&D2 engine.

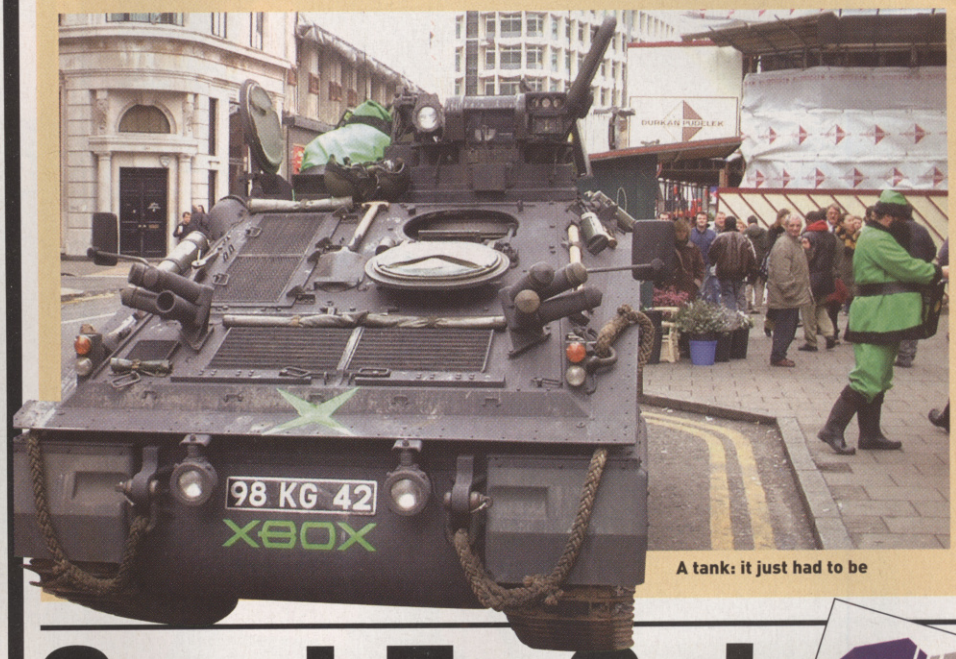
When it comes to ad campaigns, we like Infogrames' approach. For its Stuntman promotions, it hooked up gorgeous UK model Charlie O'Neale with a top commercials team. Expect the ads and game around May time.

XBOX'S UK LAUNCH

We Have Lift-Off!

When CVG was describing the Xbox earlier in the year, we couldn't help but notice its resemblance to a tank. And how did Bill Gates chose to promote the Xbox on its London launch date? With a tank, of course.

Meanwhile, the launch went off to the kind of fanfare not seen since England qualified for the World Cup. Virgin boss Richard Branson turned up at the Megastore on Oxford Street, where he presented 22-year-old Scott Rawlins with Virgin's first Xbox. At the time of writing we had no figures for Xbox sales, but if the early buzz can translate into sales, Nintendo and Sony have a big fight on their hands.



A tank: it just had to be

Good To Go!

CUBECLUB

GAMECUBE LAUNCH APPROACHES

Old hand Nintendo is gearing up for its EIGHTH console launch in 30 years of gaming, with a major marketing assault on Europe.

In the wake of the Xbox offensive, Nintendo is leading up to its May 3 20-title launch with the message that its machine is purely about games – for all ages.

"Nintendo GameCube will target everyone from every walk of life who loves playing games – no matter their ages," said a spokesman. "Nintendo believes that gaming is an attitude, not an age – and Nintendo's attitude to gaming is reflected in its Nintendo GameCube signature endline: 'Life's A Game'."

You'll have to be an escape artist to miss Ninty's campaign

As well as TV ad campaigns, press, cinema and billboards – all on the 'Life's A Game' theme – Nintendo is running an over-18s-only Cube Club event – like a touring club night with DJs and a chance to play loads of launch titles. You need to be invited though, so make sure you win a competition (see below for a chance to go to the London event).

For the rest of us, a Ninty spokesperson said: "We will be doing lots of interactive in-store promotions so people will be able to play it before it goes on sale."

Don't be a 2D square. Get cubed. Or something

AND TICKETS TO GIVE AWAY

Are you 18 or over? Do you live in the London area and are you free between 6pm and 11pm on Saturday April 27? If so, you could be in line for one of five pairs of tickets for the Cube Club, taking place at the The Bolierhouse, Old Truman Brewery, Brick Lane, London, E1. All you have to do is email your name and address to news_cvg@dennis.co.uk by April 20.

THE GAMES

OUT ON LAUNCH
Amped: Freestyle Snowboarding, Batman: Vengeance, Blood Wake, Dark Summit, Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX II, Dead Or Alive 3, Fuzion Frenzy, Halo, Jet Set Radio Future, Mad Dash Racing, Max Payne, NBA Live, NHL 2002, NHL Hitz 2002, Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee, Project Gotham Racing, RalliSport Challenge, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3, Transworld Surf, Wreckless: The Yakuza Missions

OUT NOW
Arctic Thunder, Deadly Skies, ESPN International Winter Sports, F1 2002, Genma Onimusha, The Simpsons Road Rage

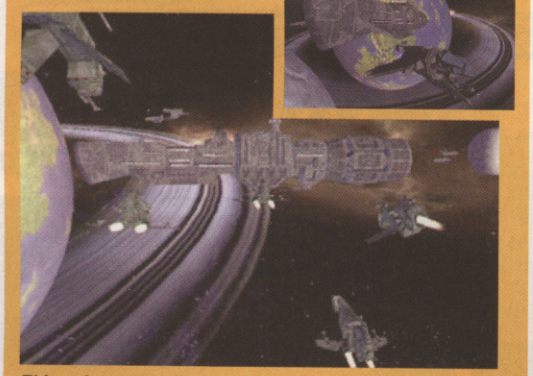
OUT NOW OR SOON
Blood Omen 2, Championship Manager: Season 01/02, Crash, NBA Inside Drive, Off Road Wide Open, Shrek, Star Wars: Obi Wan

'SCRATCH' NIXED

Xbox launched in Japan – a tough job for Microsoft – to a slight whiff of scandal. Reports surfaced that new owners were complaining that the machine scratched their disks, but Microsoft swiftly said that fewer than one per cent of punters had moaned and the games still played fine. Sour grapes from a Japanese market dominated by Sony and Nintendo?

FREELANCER

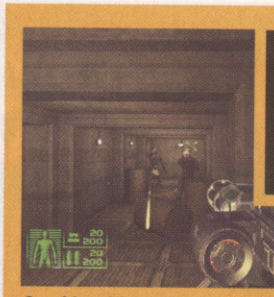
Lance In Yer Pants



Things have moved on a bit since Elite, then

Most sane people tend to steer clear of Space Opera games, but FreeLancer has tweaked our interest modules. Maybe it's because the game has been in development hell for so long and is finally confirmed for later this year, or maybe it's because many of us actually are Freelancers...

Whatever, expect a sprawling sci-fi universe to explore, real-time 3D character interaction, a 3D space-flight system, tons of missions and options to customise your spaceship. See it, er, later this year...



Corridors? In a shooter? Unheard of

Nice but it'll have to go some to beat Halo

Mace Is High

FIRST BLAST SHOTS FOR XBOX & PC

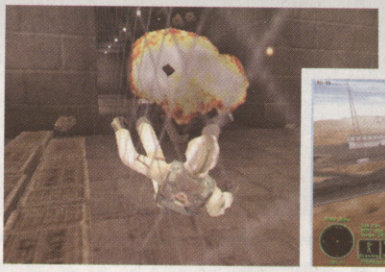
These shots are from the Xbox version of new first-person shooter Mace Griffin Bounty Hunter, also being developed for the PC.

Developer Warthog has the Tusk engine up its sleeve, with two main advantages over other game engines: it allows smooth movement between different environments, and lets gamers swap seamlessly from first-person combat to space flight action. Expect it some time in the autumn.

Dagger's Out!

NEW DELTA FORCE, NEW SCREENS

Delta Force: Task Force Dagger is the fourth game in the series, scheduled for a June release on PC only.



The land warrior engine's updated

wNovalogic's working with

Characters, missions and weapons are all new, as is the ability to play as one of 10 special forces operatives, from Delta Force and Marines Recon to SEAL and British SAS.

"We're designing and developing a Delta Force game based on actual targets and objectives [that] real life operations would encounter," frothed Mark Long of co-developers Zombie.

Reign In Pain

REIGN OF FIRE ON PS2 – SCREENS!

Humans Vs Dragons is a stand-off guaranteed to get us excited – especially if the humans are armed with modern-day weaponry.

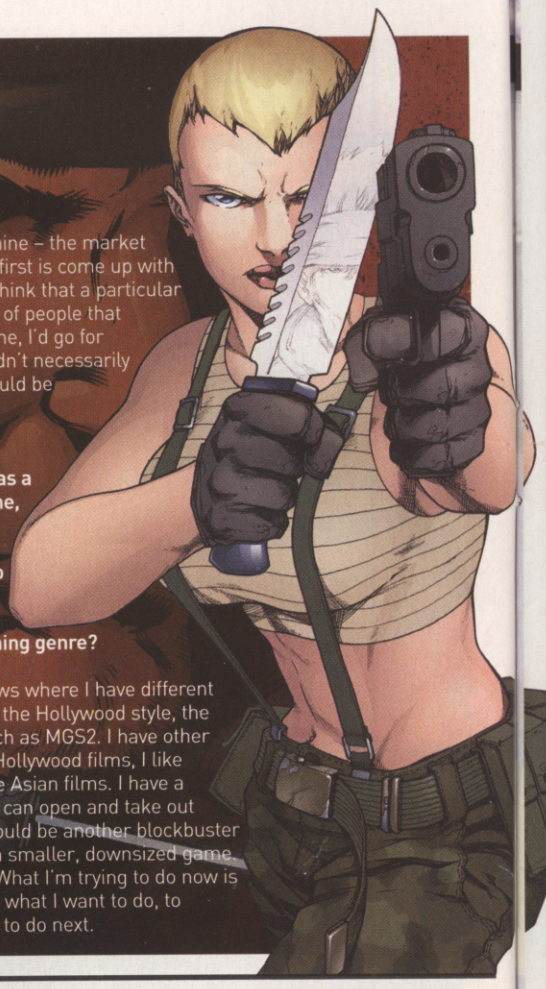
They are in Reign Of Fire, the PS2 adaptation of the forthcoming movie in which the human race must defend itself from the fire-breathing menace.

The game allows you to take the part of a soldier or an actual fire-breathing, scaly menace. Judging by the screenshots, there will be plenty of cool weapons and a slightly odd oil painting look to the game.

It's early days

Lots of vehicles to drive

Metal Gear 3?



Nope. But when Hideo Kojima spoke to CVG in a recent exclusive interview he did reveal that he worships Miyamoto and would love to work with him. Just imagine: Mario in a stealth suit, cracking necks, tranquilising turtles, and smoking cigarettes. Genius.

Anyway, whether it's Metal Gear 3, Super Metal Mario Gear Moonshine, or a kart racing game, no matter what Kojima does next it will undoubtedly be awesome. Be sure to check in to Planet CVG in the coming months to find out what it is. And if you're wondering what's with all the funky new Metal Gear artwork, well there's no reason – it's just mint, so we thought we'd put it in the mag.

CVG:
Can you comment on the rumour that's around at the moment, about you teaming up with Miyamoto?
KOJIMA:
I did meet him a couple of weeks ago and it'd be great to work with him. Mr Miyamoto is my mentor. He's never taught directly, but he's the reason I'm in this industry, so if I were to work with him I'd probably say "yes" to everything he said and that's not good. So I should think of a good way to be able to work with him.

CVG:
Do you think you would find it interesting to work on hardware other than PlayStation 2?
KOJIMA:
I have nothing against the other machines; it's not like I work on PlayStation 2 and nothing else. It just happened that Metal Gear Solid 2 was invented for PlayStation 2. I wouldn't mind working on another format. If I were to work on another machine, I'd select the machine not because of its technological capabilities, but instead for what kind of people own that machine – the market behind it. What I'd do first is come up with a game plan, and if I think that a particular machine has the kind of people that would buying this game, I'd go for that machine. It wouldn't necessarily be PlayStation 2; it could be any machine.

CVG:
Metal Gear Solid 2 was a real blockbuster game, very much a Hollywood-style game. Do you want to continue with this style or revert to a more traditional gaming genre?
KOJIMA:
I have a bunch of draws where I have different ideas. One of them is the Hollywood style, the blockbuster style, such as MGS2. I have other draws. Just as I like Hollywood films, I like British films and I like Asian films. I have a bunch of draws that I can open and take out ideas to work on. It could be another blockbuster game, or it could be a smaller, downsized game. It could be anything. What I'm trying to do now is come up with a list of what I want to do, to prioritise what I want to do next.

EVERYONE'S SHOOTING BLANKS

First it was Miyamoto, then Kojima and now it's Naka's turn. Apparently none of the three of the biggest names in videogames knows what he's going to be doing next. Are they all secretly working on top-secret super duper projects or are they just becoming a bunch of lazy bums?

Only time will tell of course, but in Yuji Naka's exclusive interview with CVG the creator of Sonic wasn't letting any hedgehogs out of the bag.

NAKA:
"I haven't decided whether we'll do a Sonic game or something else as our next project. I haven't got any ideas what I want to do in a Sonic game next time. It really depends what ideas come up when the opportunity arises. I can't really tell at the moment."

Check out the rest of our interview on the Best Games Website In The World™, www.computerandvideogames.com

Spot The Dan

See if you can find Dan's head hidden in the mag. There's a rare CVG t-shirt in it for the first email answer out of the hat. C'mon, now, how hard can it be?

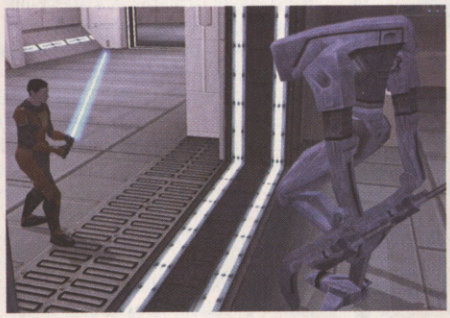
Ish 245: Dan's arse-alike face was on p87

STAR WARS RPG SNAPPED UP BY XBOX

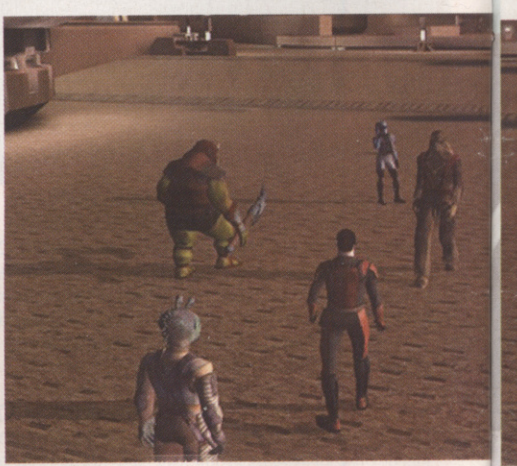
Feel Its Presence!

A role-player based 4000 years before the start of the first Star Wars film is to appear on Xbox BEFORE its PC outing. Woohoo Xbox!

Fans of both Star Wars and role-players were expecting Knights Of The Old Republic to



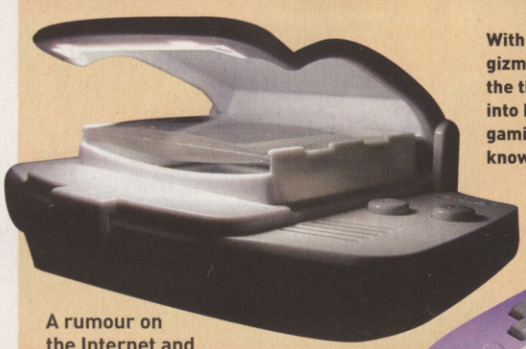
My, what a large lemon ice lolly you have, grandpa



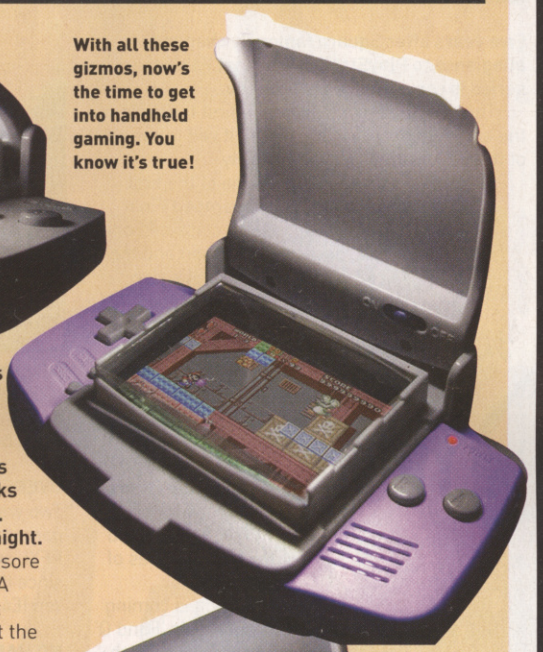
Gamorrean Guard, Wookiee, Rodian: real Wars races

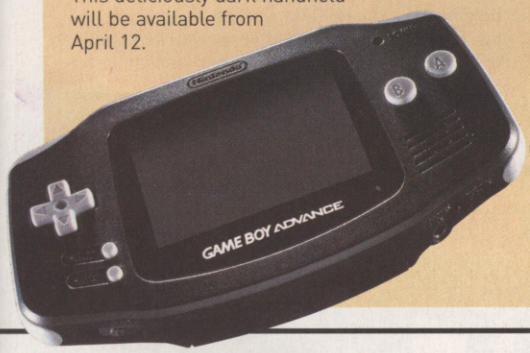
"Nurse! The Screens!"

PLAY WITH MARIO IN THE DARK – SOON!



With all these gizmos, now's the time to get into handheld gaming. You know it's true!





A rumour on the Internet and supported by industry insiders suggests that a back-lit GBA is in development. The unit could be ready as early as this Christmas. Nintendo remains characteristically tight-lipped but games sites and fan forums are ablaze with folks who reckon they've got the inside scoop. When we know, we'll set the record straight.

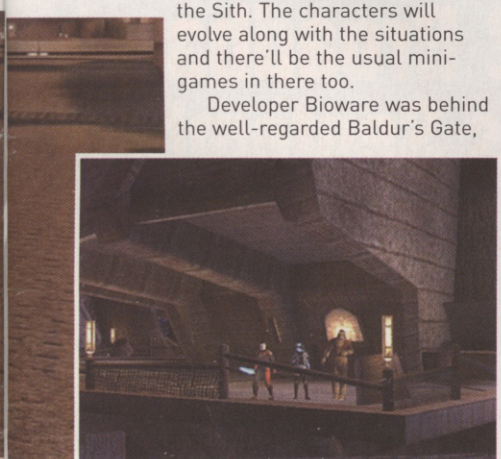
In the meantime you can soothe your sore eyes by way of the next generation of GBA light. It's called the Illuminator Pro and it uses a miniature fluorescent bulb to light the whole screen. We've had a go on the prototype and it does work. It's from Joytech and should cost a pocket-friendly £15.

And what better way of enjoying illuminated night-time GBA play than on Nintendo's sleek and sexy new GBA Black? This deliciously dark handheld will be available from April 12.

debut on PC, but – like Halo before it – the title is now scheduled to put in an appearance on Bill's machine first.

Otherwise, the song remains much the same. As planned, the action takes place thousands of years before Episode I and will detail the early battles between the Jedi and the Sith. The characters will evolve along with the situations and there'll be the usual mini-games in there too.

Developer Bioware was behind the well-regarded Baldur's Gate, and true to form these shots look fine to us. Make sure you keep an eye out for a late 2002 Xbox release, with the PC version following hot on its heels in early 2003.



This, Galaxies and Bounty Hunter... too... excited

THE STAR WARS GAMES WE WANNA SEE

1. A Star Wars rhythm-action game for the GBA that passes electric shocks to the losers

2. Cantina Crisis. Like Time Crisis but set in Mos Eisley's most famous watering hole. See also: House Of The Sith

3. A Metal Gear Solid mini-game in which you can torture Jar-Jar Binks to a slow and painful death. No mercy!

4. A Star Wars destroyer sim. Move through the ranks to Destroyer captain, and avoid 'displeasing' Vader...

5. Hoth Surgeon. Be the first to reconstruct Mark Hamill's face after his brush with the ice monster!

NEWS SHORTS

This autumn you can be bounty hunter Jango Fett, father of Boba Fett, when LucasArts brings Star Wars Bounty Hunter to PS2 and GameCube. It's a third-person action adventure, spanning 18 levels across six worlds. Jango is armed with dual blaster pistols, a flame-thrower and missile launcher and, of course, gets to fly about with a jet pack. The guys that do the Wars film special effects are also lending their skills for the cutscenes. Spast!

Operation Flashpoint's second official expansion pack for PC, Operation Flashpoint: Resistance, is set to go on sale on June 21 this year. Higher resolution textures, objects, and new gameplay elements are all on the cards. And with a new story-led Campaign that will see you fighting against renegade Russian forces in a Pre-Cold War Crisis setting, Flashpoint fans are in for a blinder. We're standing to attention already.

Unreal Tournament 2003 (previously known as Unreal Tournament II) is one of the most eagerly awaited multiplayer blasters ever and is finally to be released on PC – this summer. As in Summer 2002. 2002. Meanwhile, one-player behemoth Unreal II, which we were expecting round about now, is instead to ship to the UK just in time for Xmas. Baaaaa!

Shaping up to be one of the finest first-person shooters on PlayStation 2, TimeSplitters 2, is no longer going to remain exclusive to Sony's black beauty. It's now been confirmed that it's going to be released on both GameCube and Xbox too, with all three games scheduled for release this September. Get in!

NEWS SHORTS

Slip on your aviator shades and favourite fleecy flying jacket because Crimson Skies: High Road To Revenge is blitzing its way onto Xbox this autumn. Against a backdrop of 1930s America, you play air pirate Nathan Zachary, your mission to hunt down the murderers who killed your best buddy.

Looking surprisingly like Star Fox on SNES, Star X is an all-new shoot 'em up for GBA, expected in stores some time in May. There are 22 single-player missions to dogfight your way through, and a four-player fighter option too. Flyboys check out CVG's full preview next month.

Men In Black 2: Alien Escape on PS2 is a third-person action adventure that has you back in the shoes of Jay and Kay for some more bug-stomping action. It's penned in for release this summer to coincide with the launch of the upcoming movie.

CVG has five pairs of tickets to the PlayStation festival in London on May 4, 5 and 6. For a chance to win, send us a postcard marked 'PS2 festival' to the usual address before April 25. There's more info on www.2ctheofficialplaystationevent.com

Final Fantasy Future

THE RETURN TO NINTENDO AND MORE...

Five years after Square famously changed allegiance to PlayStation, the Final Fantasy series is coming back to Nintendo.

The deal means we'll see the first title before the end of the year in Japan. *And* it will make use of the GBA/GameCube connectivity.

It's rumoured that one of the first games will be a revamped Final Fantasy Tactics, a classic PSone title, released in Japan and the US but not Europe. It's also more than likely that the Final Fantasy role-players from the SNES will resurface on GBA.

The games are to be developed by a Square-affiliated game production company headed by Akitoshi Kawazu, best known for his work on Final Fantasy and the SaGa series of role-players.

Funding is coming from Nintendo's 'Fund Q' operation, a pot of cash set aside by Miyamoto and co to help smaller developers bring more original ideas to the GameCube and GBA.

The deal isn't exclusive, however, and Final Fantasy will continue across other formats, including PS2. To prove it, here's some news on developments in Japan...

FFXI: amazing online, but will it take off in Europe?

OVERSEAS FINAL FANTASY XI FORTUNES

Two weeks before FFX engages the UK, Japan's gamers step into another dimension – online with FFXI, out on May 16. The most significant episode since the series began launches at a price of 7800 Yen (£40) for a two-disc set.

NO HARD DRIVE OPTION FOR EURO FFX

Though the PS2 Hard Disc Drive launched to coincide with FFX in Japan, this won't happen in Europe. Only limited numbers of the Japanese HDD have been sold online since December – its benefits seem slight, only speeding up load times in FFX and VF4. No surprise, then, that Sony is holding back the HDD for Europe. If you'd like to see the PS2 HDD in the UK sooner, write in and let us know – or post your view on our website forums.

Meet up with your friends online and explore

Riding chocobos is the fastest way to travel and also makes you look cool

PlayStation 2 Broadband Starts September

Your PS2 could be hooked up to broadband services as soon as this September.

Closed trials have been underway with Telewest in the UK since December, and are said to be going extremely well.

No pricing details are available right now, but Sony has already said that there will be no connection fees in Japan and the US. Costs to play games will be decided by the relevant publishers.

The games officially announced so far include SOCOM Navy Seals, and Twisted Metal Online. Among third-party games, the most exciting are Square's Final Fantasy XI and Sierra's Tribes 2. Both those will require the HDD to play, however.

It's no secret that Gran Turismo is heading online, and it's more than likely that the next in the Tony Hawk's series will up the ante with more sophisticated online features, since it's already online.

You can expect Sony's official line on UK broadband plans to be announced in May, around the time of Electronic Entertainment Expo.

HUMANITY'S LAST HOPE IS YOU.

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GAME

MULTI-FORMAT TOP SELLERS

1	State Of Emergency	(PS2)
2	Grand Theft Auto III	(PS2)
3	Medal Of Honor: Allied Assault	(PC)
4	Monsters, Inc.	(PS2, PS, GBA, GBC)
5	Gran Turismo 3	(PS2)
6	Final Fantasy VI	(PSone)
7	Max Payne	(PS2, PC)
8	Harry Potter	(PS, PC, GBA, GBC)
9	Wipeout Fusion	(PS2)
10	Maximo	(PS2)

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XBOX SPECIAL!

Crash Test

DON'T GET LUMPED WITH TRIPE

Similar to the other Modena wheels (no bad thing), this is a quality peripheral that you can use either clamped onto a table top or strapped round your legs. The analog wheel resists nicely and the pedals are fine, but our unit had an exceptionally weak rumble.

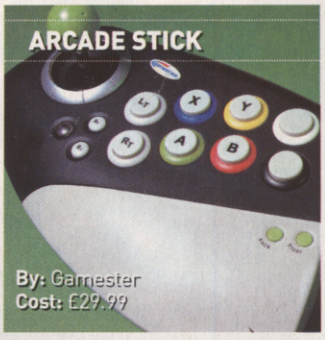
★★★★★★★★★★

Looks like a TIE Fighter, drives like a dream. A sensible option if you're looking for a cheaper alternative to racing wheels. Steer with the left hand like you would a wheel, while holding the right side like a pad. Once you get used to it, it works brilliantly.

★★★★★★★★★★

For its Xbox pad, Joytech has gone all out for size. It's as hefty as the official pad, which means that some people will have the same difficulty using their trigger finger and the right stick at the same time. Not much innovation, but it's still a grand pad.

★★★★★★★★★★



You need to be a real fighting fan to get the most value from this arcade stick, as it's useless for anything other than beat 'em ups. The unit is large with a weighty bottom and a choice of two different sticks. It's programmable too for those tricky combos.

★★★★★★★★★★

"But Sir, They're Eating The Guests"

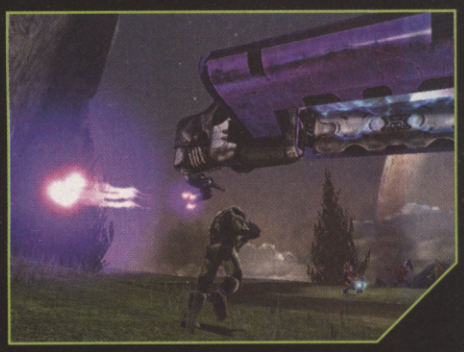
DINO THEME PARK MADNESS

Jurassic Park 3: Park Builder on GBA? Let's face it, it wasn't the greatest dinosaur-meets-theme-park sim going, was it?

We have higher hopes, though, for Jurassic Park: Project Genesis, which aims to bring the manage-yer-own-park experience to Xbox, PC and PS2.

Judging from the action-packed shots, the GBA game's buy-a-coach-and-set-admission-prices elements will hopefully be played down, while the save-the-guests-from-the-escaped-and-hungry-dinosaurs bits will be beefed-up to the bloody, intestine-strewn max. Here's hoping, anyway.

Where's Turok when you need him?



XBOX

BUNGIE

ONLY ON XBOX

No pressure, but the mother of all combat games has arrived. Halo takes you to an alien ring world where you must destroy mankind's sworn enemy: The Covenant. Vanquish the alien hordes with a vast arsenal of weapons and vehicles, whilst laughing in the face of the Geneva Convention. Any wonder Edge magazine gave it 10/10. Just prepare your armoured underwear.

www.xbox.com/uk/halo

PLAY MORE. PLAY HALO.™

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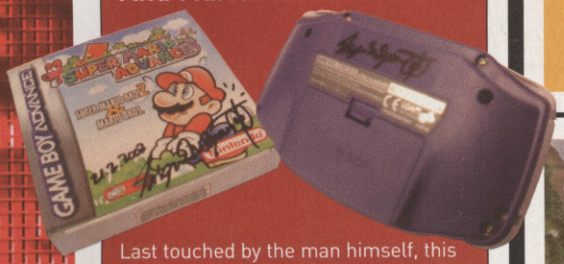
Win Mr Miyamoto's GBA!

And Mario Advance too



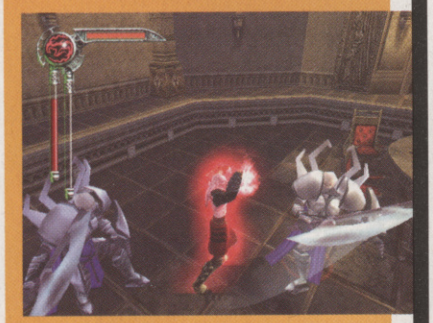
Last touched by the man himself, this Miyamoto-signed GBA and copy of Mario Advance could be yours courtesy of Nintendo, if you can answer this very taxing question:

What is the name of Mario's arch-enemy?
A. Bozo
B. Browner
C. Bowser
D. Bruiser

Send your answers on a postcard to 'I wanna win me Miyamoto's GBA', CVG, 30 Cleveland Street, London, W1T 4JD, before the compo closes on May 8.

NEWS SHORTS

You want blood, PC owners? You got it, because Eidos has set a spring date for PC release of Legacy Of Kain sequel, Blood Omen 2. Wa-ha-ha! Judging from the screenshot we've managed to sandwich in here, graphical marks will be up to their usual 10, and there'll be gothic atmos in spades alongside spurting jugulars a-go-go. Check our PS2 and Xbox review on page 94.



Tweaks to the TOCA engine should make collisions more detailed and realistic than ever, claims developer Codemasters. The game, TOCA Race Driver, is due in June on PS2 and PC and it will boast a damage engine working on real-life data, making crashes better than ever before. The engine's called a Finite Element Modelling engine, but that's probably a bit too much information.

DISNEY AND KONAMI: NEW RUMOURS

"On Me Head, Donald!"

Rumours of a Disney football game developed by footy experts Konami for the GameCube are hotting up, with talk of the title being unveiled at this year's E3 show.

A partnership between Disney and Konami has already been announced, with Konami committed to developing Disney sports titles. And now it seems (if you believe the gossip, which we do) that the first may well be a footy game starring Disney characters – ISS with Mickey Mouse, Pluto, Donald and the rest of them, basically. Sounds blimmin' mint to us.

Set just twenty years in the future, you can play as the USA, China, or freedom-fighters the GLA

Some would say it's about time C&C went full 3D

General Mayhem!

NEW C&C IN 3D

Command & Conquer's real-time strategy games hardly need any introduction, but what if we were to tell you that the latest instalment, Command & Conquer: Generals, is in full 3D?

Set 20 years into the future, the player will take up the cause of either the USA, China or terrorist group Global Liberation Army, who are all pitted against one another with 10 missions per side to complete. It'll obviously get a PC showing, but there are strong rumours it may also be developed for the Xbox – awesome!

The 3D is looking cool so far, with developer Westwood exploiting, among other things, the possibility of day to night operations where dark will fall before your eyes as you battle.

That could be any German village. But for the tanks

Games Didn't Cause US Massacre

A lawsuit levelled against the videogame manufacturers accused of influencing the 'Columbine Massacre' of 1999 has been dismissed by a court in the US.

Videogame publishers including Nintendo and Atari were being sued alongside AOL Time Warner and its New Line Cinema movie division. US District Judge Lewis Babcock decided it was the kids who carried out the massacre, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, that were responsible, and not the influence of videogames or the film.

In other news, Nintendo is also being taken to court by the mother of a 30-year-old US guy who died during a seizure suffered while playing N64. He played eight hours a day, six days a week.

CACKMAN

The independent voice of the free gaming nation

PANTS!

Why Maximo's a Croc of cack

Do you see what Cackman did there? That pair of reeking kecks to the right are, of course, Maximo's soiled undercrackers. And if you're a regular Cack-follower, you're probably thinking Cackman's going to slag Maximo off. Honestly, do you really think Cackman is as petty-minded as that? No, he is of course going to slag off a whole bunch of other gaming sh.**

"WHAT SH IS THAT, CACKMAN?"**

But let's start with Maximo: Ghosts To Glory. It's 'inspired' by Capcom's old skool platformer, Ghouls 'N Ghosts. Must be the same kind of inspiration that drove pop hippo Rik Waller to cover Whitney Houston's I Will Always Love You.

Actually, the reality is Maximo is 'inspired' because it's a bloody insult to even suggest it's a sequel.

Cackman's fully aware of Maximo's rave reviews. They are understandable. All today's game reviewers are, after all, just kids. Cackman, however, was around when the original Ghouls 'N Ghosts was in the arcades. Cackman remembers when games were good. And G'NG was utterly brilliant, no argument.

The action was unrelenting, with knight Arthur leaping everywhere in his pants, frantically shooting at skeletons rising out of the ground beneath him, desperately trying to reach that chest in the hope that it contained armour. Then, when he finally reached it, a bloody wizard would pop out and turn him into a duck. Nail-biting? It was finger-devouring. And that was just the start of Level One.

And then there's Maximo. You stroll lazily around a 3D landscape killing baddies, picking up glowing balls and opening chests with keys. Which reminds Cackman of PSone game Croc.

It shouldn't be called Ghosts To Glory, it should be From Good To Croc. How can Capcom make a new instalment of one the greatest game series ever and end up with Croc? In fact, how come everything is like Croc?

AND NOW FOR THE REST OF THEM...

Sonic Adventure 2? Croc. Pac-Man World 2? Croc. PAC-MAN for chrissakes! And don't even get Cackman started on Mario Sunshine. He has a very bad feeling about this one. Why does Mario need a water-gun on his back? Last time they messed with Mario they had him pulling up turnips. Still, at least it's not Croc.

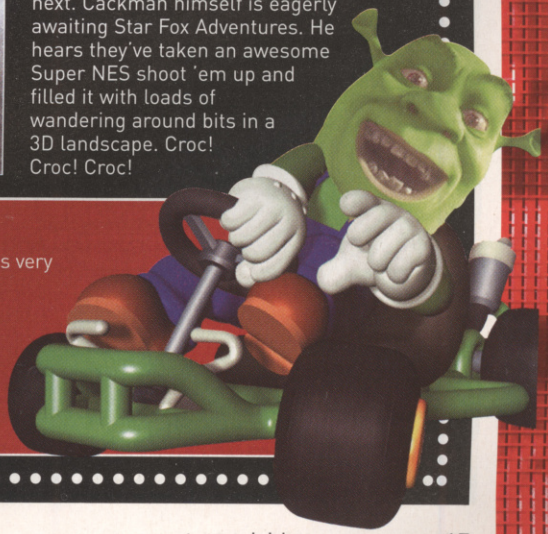
What Cackman's trying to say is, why are games companies taking excellent games franchises and turning them all into the same thing – free-roaming 3D adventures? They'll be doing it to Tetris next. Cackman himself is eagerly awaiting Star Fox Adventures. He hears they've taken an awesome Super NES shoot 'em up and filled it with loads of wandering around bits in a 3D landscape. Croc! Croc! Croc!

Maximo: a skid mark on gaming's Y-fronts

SHREK KART UPDATE!

And now on a totally Croc-free note, Cackman was very excited when he heard the latest on his favourite go-kart game based on the over-popular 3D wandering movie, Shrek.

Yep, they've taken it beyond Thunderdome with an all-new name – Shrek Swamp Kart Speedway. That's got to be the best name since Trevor McFur in Crescent Galaxy.



Cackman's opinions aren't necessarily those of CVG

GAMES AS THEY USED TO BE!

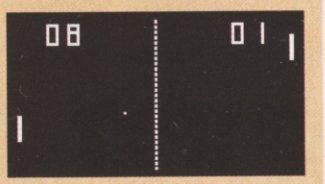
What's That, Pong?

Game On will be the largest-ever exhibition of games outside of trade events – and you can be a part of it.

The show aims to detail the history of games, right from Space War in 1962 – before any of us were born – right up to the present day and as-yet unreleased games for Xbox, GameCube and PlayStation 2.

Xbox 19: slimline

The exhibition will be held between May 16 and September 15 this year at the Barbican Centre in London. For more details and advance bookings, call 020 7638 8891, or click on the Game On site at www.gameonweb.co.uk



"You've got this bat, right, and you move it to knock the ball..."

OLD FAVE GETS NEXT GEN'D

Who's The New Guy?

Guess where these two shots come from? Yep, Rayman 3!

The new romp is likely to appear on all platforms, spearheading a slew of new Ubi Soft games, and if this brace of images is anything to go by, it'll look like Rayman, but SO not as we know it. Keep 'em peeled for loads more details next issue.

YES, BUT WHERE'S RAYMAN HIMSELF?

Two moons make up for lack of limbs

Looks like a Rayman redneck to us

DEAD OR ALIVE – THE MOVIE

It's Gonna Be A Hit!

The latest game to become film is jiggly beat 'em up Dead Or Alive, which has been signed for a big-screen adaptation.

A company called Mindfire Entertainment has gained the rights to produce Dead Or Alive for the cinema, and though Mindfire is hardly in the league of heavyweights like 20th Century Fox or Warner, its Free Enterprise is a well regarded indie hit.

The movie will be a live action adaptation of the beat 'em up series (famous mainly for having bouncing breasts in it, frankly) and is likely to appear in 2003. Unlikely to be Oscar quality, then.

OI, HOLLYWOOD! NO!

The films of games they should never have made

SUPER MARIO BROS

Super Turkey Cackstorm, more like. Bob Hoskins died a miserable death as Mario, with John Leguizamo faring little better as Luigi. Leguizamo was last seen walking on his knees in Moulin Rouge. Tossbag.

STREET FIGHTER: THE MOVIE

Kylie may be the super-cool-and-sexy Princess of Pop now, but back in 1994 she couldn't get arrested. This move into rubbishy films was one of many hapless career blunders she made, playing Cammy alongside Jean Claude Van Damme. Oops.

MORTAL KOMBAT

Director Paul Anderson made a not-bad job of this film, released in 1995 and starring Christopher Lambert as Lord Rayden. Some even call this the 'best computer game film ever made'.

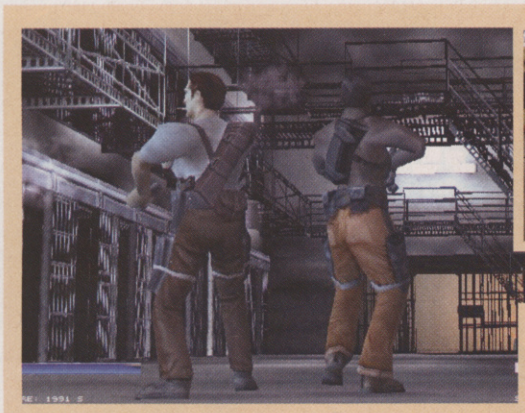
Unfortunately, the film's success prompted the sequel, Mortal Kombat: Annihilation (1997), which was pretty awful. Anderson has gone on to direct the new Resident Evil film – which we'll tell you about next issue.

STREET IN STOR

DATE		NAME	FORMAT
APRIL	12	MEGARACE 3	PS2
	12	PLANET OF THE APES	PS2
	12	CRASH	XBX
	12	GRAND THEFT AUTO 3	PC
	19	CEL DAMAGE	XBX
	19	TD OVERDRIVE	PS2/XBX
	19	DUNGEON SIEGE	PC
	19	ALEX FERGUSON'S PLAYER MANAGER 2002	PS2
	19	TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2002	PC/PS2
	26	2002 FIFA WORLD CUP	XBX/PC
	26	ICE AGE	GBA
	26	SPACE INVADERS	GBA
	26	JUNGLE BOOK	GBA/PS2
	26	MAFIA	PC
	26	DIE HARD: NAKATOMI PLAZA	PC
	26	AIRLINES 2	PC

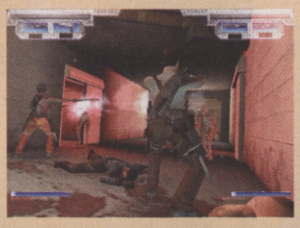
DATE		NAME	FORMAT
APRIL	26	BASS FISHING	PS/PS2/PC/DC
	26	SHEEP	GBA/PC/PS2
	TBC	ULTIMATE FIGHTING CHAMPIONSHIP TAPOUT	XBX
	TBC	DUKE NUKEM ADVANCE	GBA
	TBC	ZONE OF ENDERS: FIST OF MARS	GBA
	TBC	MALL TYCOON	PC
	TBC	PROJECT EARTH	PC
	TBC	AGASSI TENNIS	PC
	TBC	MUSIC	PC
	TBC	SVEN GORAN ERICCSON'S WORLD CUP CHALLENGE	PC
	TBC	SUPER TRUCKS	PS2
	TBC	END GAME	PS2
	TBC	ICEWIND DALE 2	PC
	TBC	MIKE TYSON HEAVYWEIGHT BOXING	PS2/XBX

*Disclaimer: Release dates were correct when CVG went to press but dates are subject to change.



First Calibur, now Caliber. It's Calibre, okay?

Both characters appear on screen at the same time



There's no stat screen for co-op

Blast 'Em!

RAGE'S TWIN CALIBER REACHES PS2

Never let it be said that Twin Caliber lacks gore. Judging by these screenshots it's as blood-soaked as your average Hong Kong action movie.

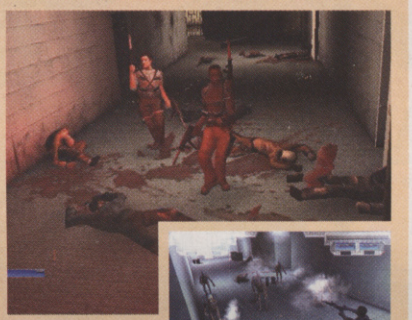
And blood and guts ain't the only similarity to the efforts of John Woo and pals. The game also includes a unique dual-action shooting style, which means you get to control two weapons independently at the same time – just like in Hard Boiled.

To underline the movie feel, the action pits you as one half of – wait for it – 'unlikely partners sheriff Fortman and violent prisoner Valdez', who must fight off members of an evil cult.

Playing in either single or cooperative modes in over 12 different levels, including a rooftop chase and a moving train, this looks top gear for the PlayStation 2 later this year.

Later you get TNT and a mini-gun

Bosses include headless train drivers



➲ You'll face mutant wall-crawlers

NEWS SHORTS

Scheduled for release any day, er, soon, BAM! Entertainment's Chase is a vehicle-based stunt 'em up which owes more than a wee nod to Stuntman on the PS2, since it's set in the world of Hollywood blockbusters and follows the career of a young stunt driver.

A play based on moves in Tekken is currently in the middle of a nationwide tour. Helmet, by Douglas Maxwell, uses digital animation and hip-hop choreography to ape the moves of all your favourite fighting games characters.

Before you go accusing Ubi Soft of trotting out licences, check out XIII (that's 13 to you and me), which is a game that creates "a completely interactive graphic novel within a cel-shaded environment". Apparently. It'll be spread across Xbox, GameCube, PS2 and PC; keep an eye out for it early next year. More next ish.

DATES

ES SOON

DATE		NAME	FORMAT
APRIL	TBC	COUNTER-STRIKE: CONDITION ZERO	PC
MAY	3	2002 FIFA WORLD CUP	GC
		BURNOUT	XBX/GC
	3	UNIVERSAL STUDIOS	GC
	3	CRAZY TAXI	GC
	3	DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX 2	GC
	3	STAR WARS ROGUE SQUADRON 2: ROGUE LEADER	GC
	3	TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3	GC
	3	SONIC ADVENTURE 2: BATTLE	GC
	3	LUIGI'S MANSION	GC
	3	WAVE RACE: BLUE STORM	GC
	3	BATMAN VENGEANCE	GC
	3	WORMS BLAST	GC
	3	DONALD DUCK QUACK ATTACK	GC
	3	DISNEY'S TARZAN FREERIDE	GC

DATE		NAME	FORMAT
MAY	3	CEL DAMAGE	GC
	3	SIMPSONS ROAD RAGE	GC
	3	SUPER MONKEY BALL	GC
	3	ISS2	GC/PS2
	3	PREMIER MANAGER 2002	GC/PS2
	3	FREEDOM FORCE	PC
	3	MOBILE FORCES	PC
	3	DOWNFORCE	GBA/PS2
	3	EXTREME G-3	GC/PS2
	7	SOLDIER OF FORTUNE 2: DOUBLE HELIX	PC/PS2/DC
	10	MANIC MINER	GBA
	10	VIRTUA FIGHTER 4	PS2
	10	LEGENDS OF WRESTLING	GC
	17	DAVID BECKHAM SOCCER	XBX/PS2
	17	LEGEND OF ALON D'AR	PS2
	24	GUN METAL	XBX

RAVEN SHIELD ON XBOX

"Spear We Go!"

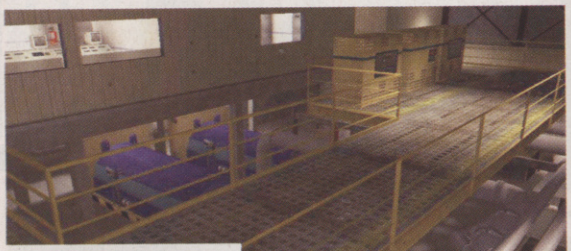
If Rainbow Six stood up to be counted, they'd find they are only three

Like heavily armed jam, Rainbow Six has been spread over just about every games format currently in existence, but it was last year's effort, Rainbow Six: Rogue Spear that really got the series moving.

Now the follow-up is good to go, and the series gets its next-gen debut with Raven Shield, or Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six: Raven Shield, to give it its full, tongue-twisting name.

"Nice town. Let's blow it to pieces"

Due for release in September on PC and Xbox, action will be similar to that of Rogue Spear. However, Raven Shield uses the Unreal engine, so expect even greater levels of gun-toting realism as you power round 15 new single-player missions, which include preventing an armed gang from robbing a London bank. Cool. Further information is scarce but we should have more details next month.



CVG Alex's office

"Nice factory. Let's blow it to pieces"

WE MAKE THIS MAG

Meet CVG

Jenny McComb, Designer

Been training for SAS Are You Tough Enough by lugging an Xbox around London. "It's too punishing," she wailed after turning puce after 30 seconds of strain.

Les Ellis, Games Editor

The Lord of Death has been traumatised by the mag's move from the dungeon to the dizzy heights of CVG Towers' second floor. "But there's daylight up here!"

Mike Cooper, Writer

Completed Advance Wars again. Finished Metal Gear 2 in European Extreme. Interviewed a certain Mr H Kojima. Exploded with excitement. Had to reboot his life in Safe Mode.

Dan Payne, Art Editor

The only man in the UK to be run over twice in the space of a couple of months – while walking on the pavement. He says it's his magnetic personality...

Alex Simmons, Editor

While you're reading this, he'll be scuba diving in the Canaries, between sipping cold Coronas out of bronzed belly-buttons. Well, he would be if it wasn't for Force 12 Hurricane 'Dark Destroyer'. Hope he packed his GBA...

Lee Skittrell, Senior Writer

Has founded a new cult sweeping the nation: The Order Of The Golden Sun, whose primary belief is that the Sun shines out of Nintendo's GBA (Golden Bloody Arse).

Pete Walker, Deputy Editor

Accidentally basted a GBA in bacon fat while playing Crash Bandicoot XS on GBA. "Lucky I borrowed Alex's GBA while he's on holiday, eh?" he beamed.

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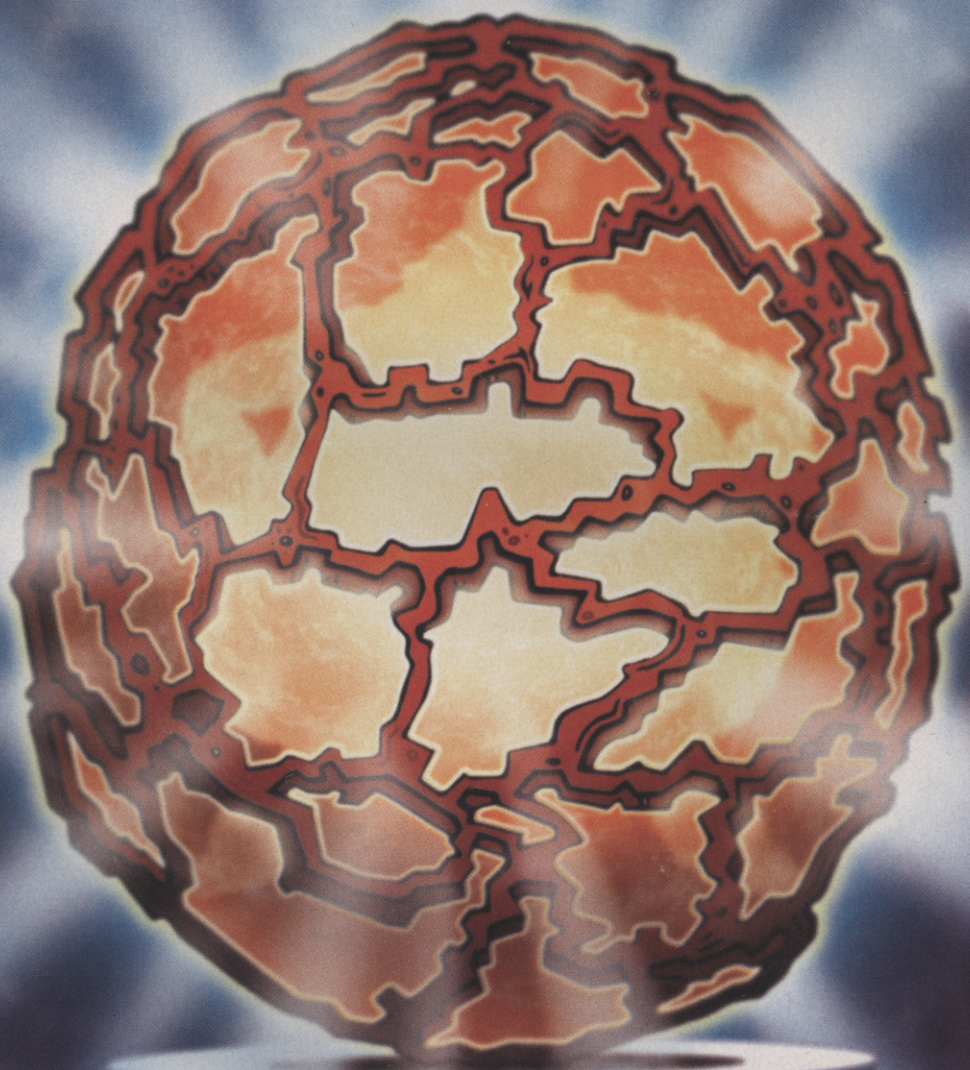

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NEW FROM THE PRODUCER OF RESIDENT EVIL AND DINO CRISIS!

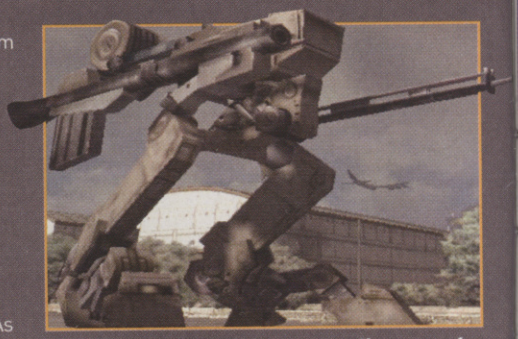
Mikami's 'Tekki'

GAME: **TEKKI** FORMAT: **XBOX** OUT: **TBC**
DEVELOPER: **CAPCOM** PUBLISHER: **TBC**

The guy who gave us Res Evil and Dino Crisis, Shinji Mikami, has a staggering new Xbox game on the way. It's called Tekki, and was originally announced as Brain Box last May. It's awesome, but it's going to be a handful. Certainly, the controller required to play it could have you collapsing under its weight.

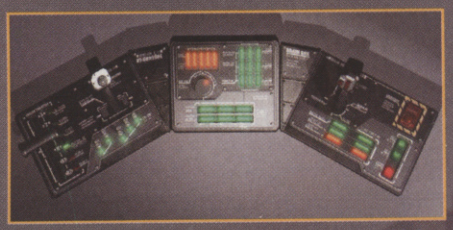
Tekki promises to be the most complex but ultimately rewarding robot simulator anywhere, ever. Well, it'll certainly be the most hardcore. It hits Japan this summer and a UK release is on the horizon, but we're waiting to hear from Capcom about when this will happen. It may take a while, and there's a very big reason why.

You enrol to pilot a futuristic military vehicle called Vertical Tank (VT), an evolved modern military weaponry. The crux of the game is engaging other VTs in full-on battle. Essentially, the VT is a variation of the robot suits common to countless Japanese comic books, games and animated movies. However, unlike previous videogame interpretations, the VT requires such a level of control that a huge controller has been created exclusively for it. As in 40 buttons, a shift lever, two control levers and three foot-pedals!



Wouldn't be surprised if Capcom uses the power of Xbox to model every last nut and bolt in these VTs

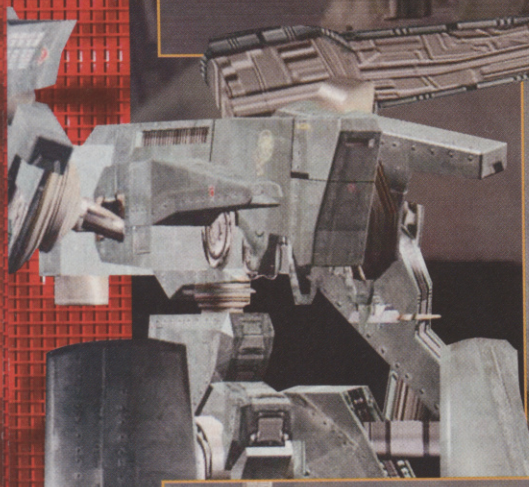
Vertical Tanks could be the ultimate tool for eradicating inline skaters from our parks

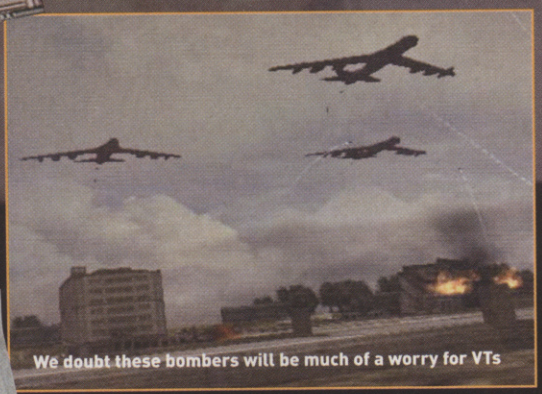


Before enjoying the game you need to master this!

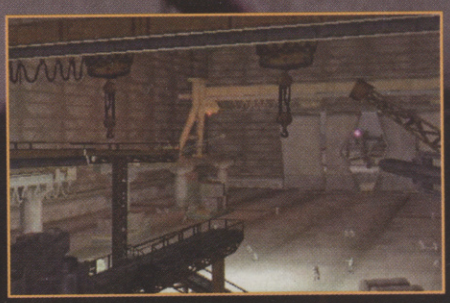
Clearly this is targeted at older, experienced players, the kind who will buy into Xbox early. Pricing aside – and it will be expensive – the game will cost you in time and concentration. You need to perfect the start-up sequence first, taking care not to topple the VT by turning too fast, or coming to a sudden stop. Your aim is to master the control to such an extent that the VT feels like an extension of your body. And it's a solo experience. Like we said: hardcore.

It's not certain whether Tekki is solely dependent on the controller. However, it's hard to imagine such a number of buttons and levers mapped onto even two Dual Shocks. Could be that Capcom will need to find an alternative way of bringing Tekki to the UK, similar to how Sega handled Samba De Amigo: mail order.

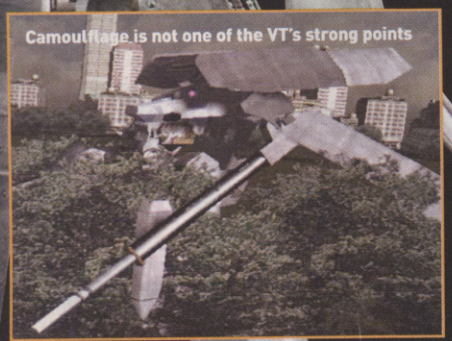




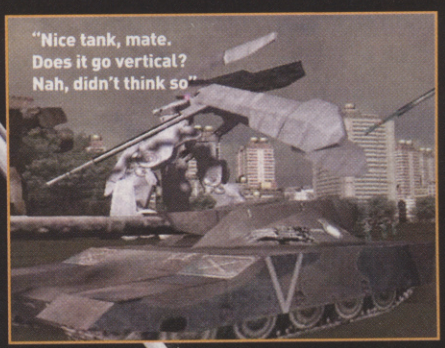
We doubt these bombers will be much of a worry for VTs



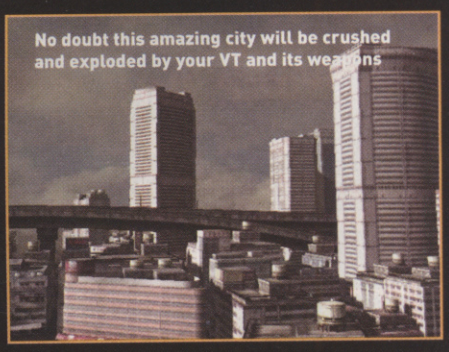
There's so much detail in this game, it's pretty scary



Camoulflage is not one of the VT's strong points



"Nice tank, mate. Does it go vertical? Nah, didn't think so"



No doubt this amazing city will be crushed and exploded by your VT and its weapons

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US IMPORT VERSION

FORMAT: XBOX **OUT:** US IMPORT **PLAYERS:** 1-4 **DEVELOPER:** ANCHOR **PUBLISHER:** THQ **WORDS & SCRE**

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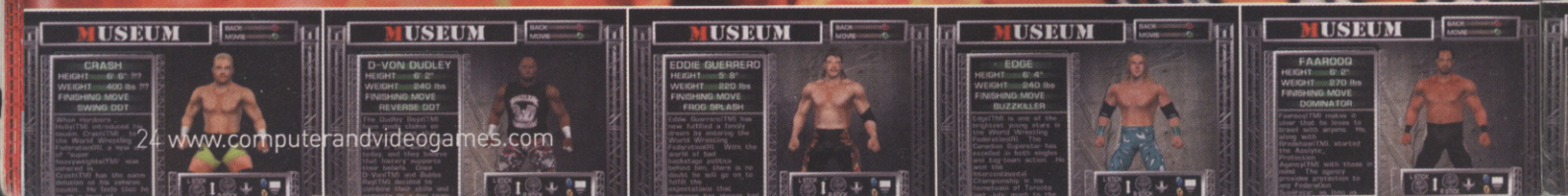
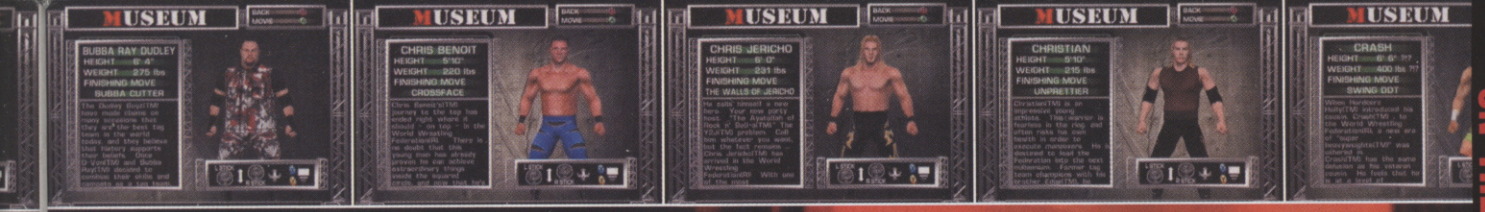
WWF RAW

XBOX GETS

Find out why the Yanks have made WWF Raw the second fastest selling game on Xbox

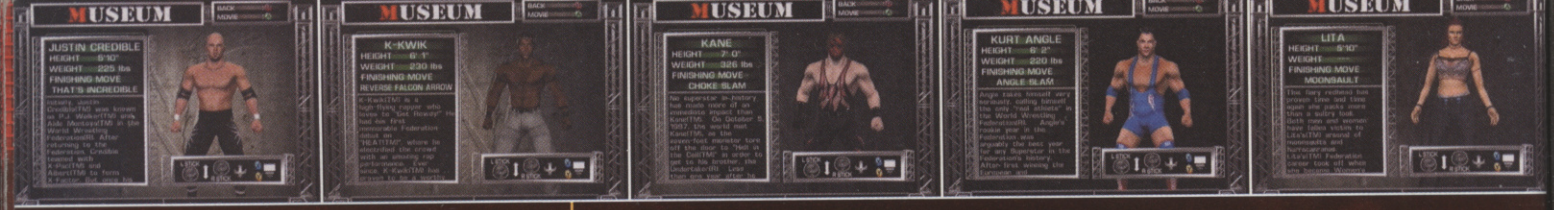
Only Halo has managed to out-perform WWF Raw on Xbox in America, so we just had to see what all the fuss is about. It's not been long since SmackDown! Just Bring It was ousted from our PS2s by the might of Metal Gear Solid 2, but has Microsoft's box of tricks managed to come up with the biggest WWF game yet?

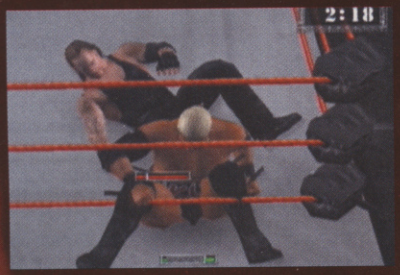




ENSHOTS: LES ELLIS

CHOKESLAMMED





It's Friday night. You are sat, eyes glued to the TV screen. The Undertaker delivers another chokeslam to The Rock, who was trying to end The Phenom's decade of destruction with a steel chair. 'Taker's brother Kane is watching, ready to interfere if The Rock gets the upper hand. He's already destroyed the Women's champ to take that title with the use of a giant tuna. Er, hang on. Kane. Seven ft, 300lb bloke who sets fire to stuff. And he has the Women's belt? This ain't Sky Sports, it's your Xbox.

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Right from the opening sequence you'll notice just how close to the TV show this looks. Pyros exploding, cameras swooping and the crowd going wild. This carries on when your wrestlers step foot in the arena, as their entrances are absolutely spot on. The combination of entrance videos, multiple camera angles and the highly detailed characters provides a real visual treat.

And let's not forget the music. It's all here, even the licensed songs like Limp Bizkit's Rollin' for The Undertaker and Motorhead's Play The Game for Triple H. And that's not Limp Bizkit's only contribution to the game – but more about that later.

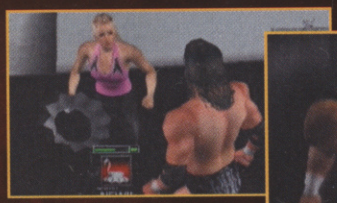
Okay, this doesn't look *exactly* like the TV show, but it's the closest they've come yet. You want TV-style presentation? How about the cameras moving out to give you a better look at the awesome moves or a split-screen replay of you doing your finishing move? The attention to detail is breathtaking. Tattoos are all present and correct, and the hair, faces, muscles and even the cellulite on Rikishi's ass work together to create something close to a carbon copy of the real thing.

IT'S NOT SMACKDOWN!

And you know what? You shouldn't care that this isn't trying to follow in the footsteps of the PlayStation 2 monster hit. WWF Raw follows the N64 No Mercy and Wrestlemania style of game, with a whole bunch of enhancements that make it worthy of the title 'Next Generation'. The first thing you notice is they have done away with the Career mode, a feature which sucked in SmackDown! Just Bring It anyway. It's been replaced with seven styles of Exhibition match and six championship ladders for you to climb in your bid to claim the title belts.

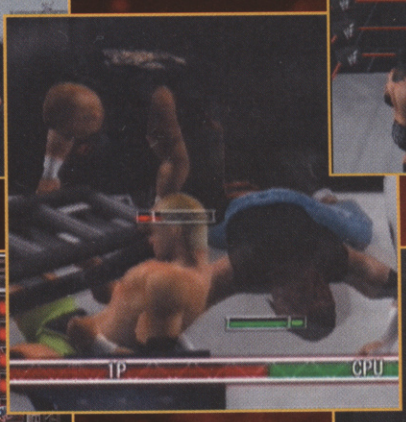
COLLECTABLES

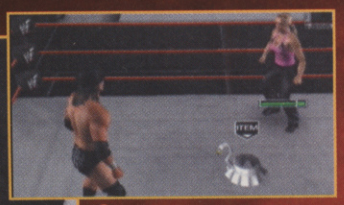
You want a challenge? How about over 170 items to find? Most are fairly straightforward, like chairs behind the announcers table which you pick up and use to re-arrange someone's face. Other stuff such as sunglasses you can give to the steroid-freaks you create yourself. And the giant tuna? Maybe they'd had a heavy night when they thought of that one.



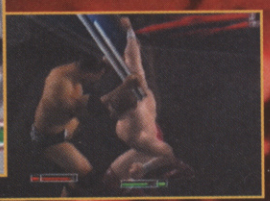
Molly finds a plastic swan to use on Triple H

All items you find are put in the museum and saved for later use

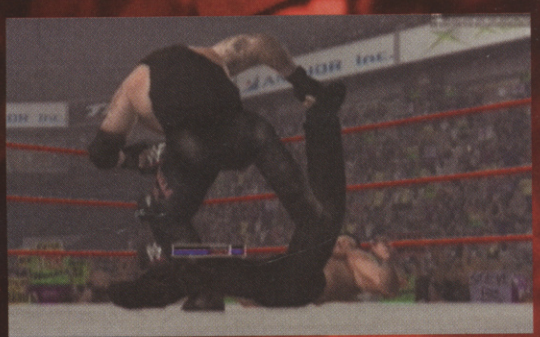




But if you lose it, your opponent can use it on you



The old crowd pleaser: the steel chair. Great sound effect



The Undertaker helps Steve Blackman's sing a few octaves higher. Ow!

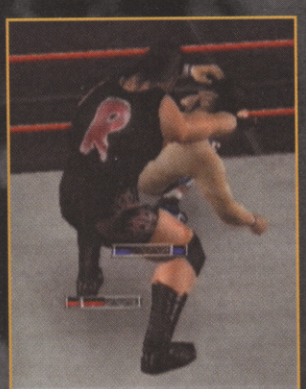
THE ROCK SAYS...

Be prepared to learn a new fighting style. Previous WWF games have basically let you do what moves you want when you want so you can showcase your favourites and not much else. But now when you lock up you have to be constantly thinking about what will please the crowd, as the spectators play a big part in the fights. You also have to monitor your energy gauge, not to see how close you are to getting

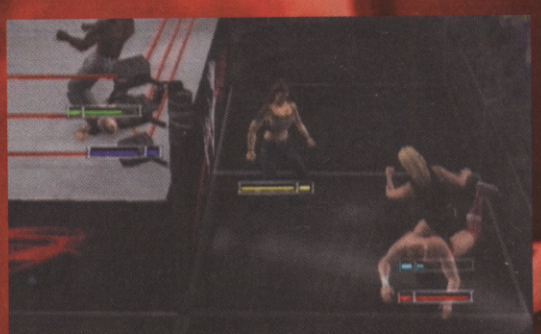
WORK THAT CROWD

WWF Raw is not all about pounding your opponent into the mat with a few moves to get it over and done with as quickly as possible. Just like in real life, you are judged on how you can keep the crowd entertained. Keep repeating the same old moves and the crowd will turn on you, boosting your opponent and making it harder for you to win. Keep pounding on him when he's on the mat and all of a sudden you'll be the bad guy.

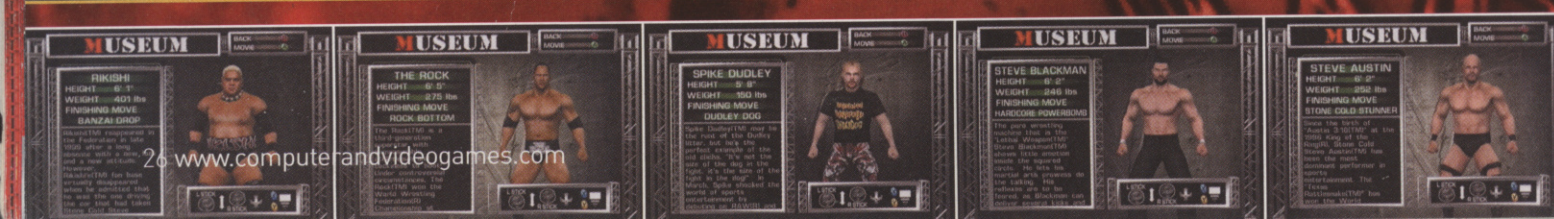
Punches are dull – think big

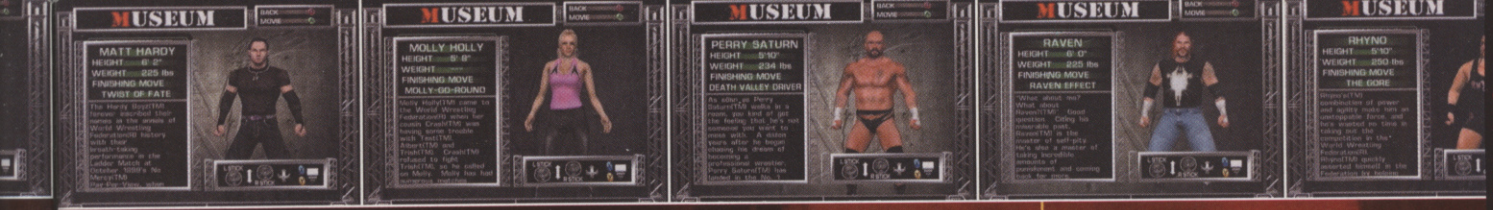


The crowd will hate it if you don't let the guy up off the canvas



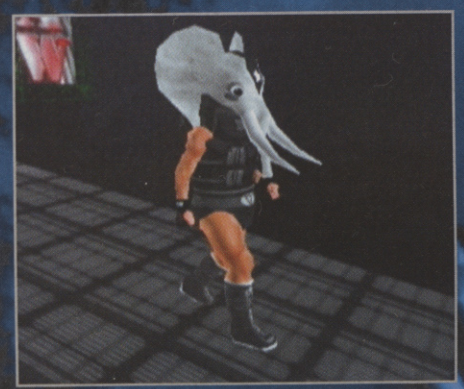
The women fancy a little action outside the ring



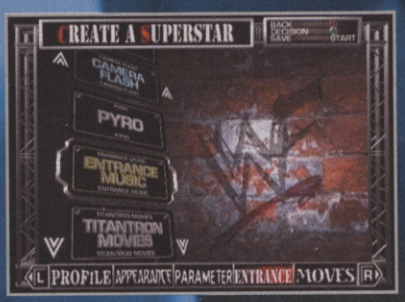


PLAY GOD

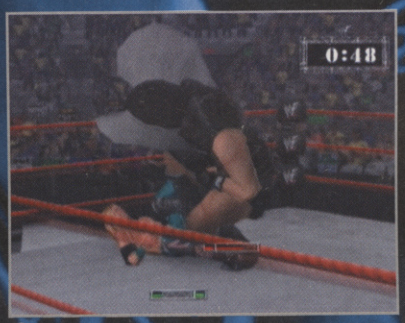
If the 35 WWF superstars aren't enough to cater for all your grappling needs, you can always make your own. Items you unlock in the main game can be added to your creation at any time. You can even design your own grand entrance, selecting the colours and flashing patterns of the lights. Cool!



Er, it was late at night when we did this

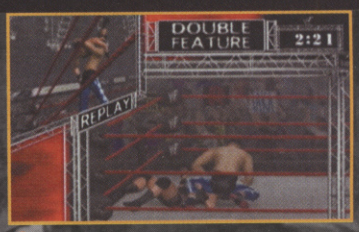


You can even set the lightshow and pyro



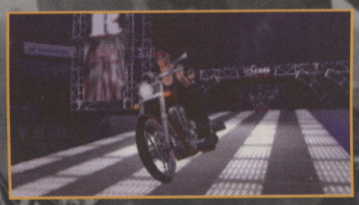
Elephant Man gives Edge a pasting

TV OR NOT TV, THAT IS THE QUESTION

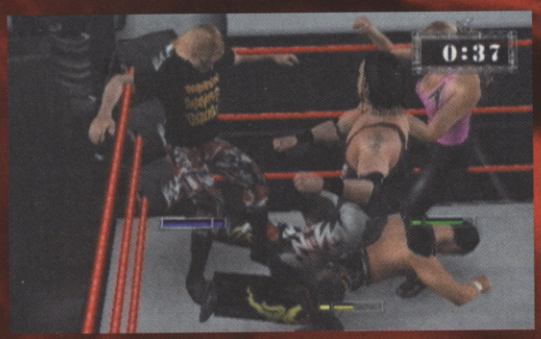


Cameras cut away to show highlights

Combining pyros, music and video footage with game engine features allows WWF Raw to come the closest yet to recreating the organised chaos that is an episode of WWF Raw on TV.



Every entrance is just about perfect



Little Spike Dudley gets pasted in a three-on-one. They want blood

pinned, but because the amount of energy you have dictates what moves you are strong enough to do. Backing off from your opponent before you grapple could be the difference between a simple clothesline and a brain-busting high-impact spectacular that will drive the fans wild.

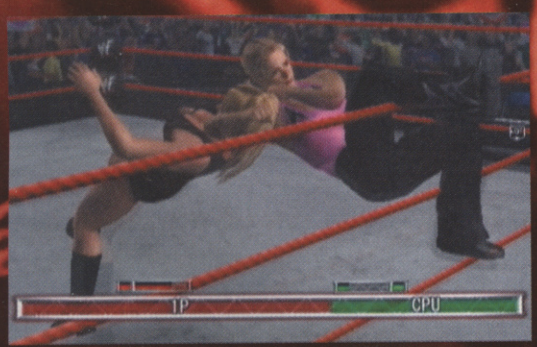
All 35 wrestlers have to be handled differently too. While Jeff Hardy may be lightning-fast, he can't take a lot of damage, so if he's in against a brutal man mountain such as The Undertaker you have to hit and run. Your opponents know this too. So Hardcore Holly always goes for a quick victory (sometimes in under 20 seconds), while the Dudleys will try to punish you before slapping their finisher, the 3D, on your candy ass.

COLLECTORS' ITEMS

You may be wondering if the lack of a Career mode will affect how long you want to play. Well, apart from the fact it takes bloody ages to win the six championship belts and unlock the four hidden characters, there are well over one hundred collectable items to find in the game. Collectables, stored in a museum, range from the obvious, like a steel chair, to the, er, plain weird, like a chef's hat.

You can use these items immediately in a fight or you can add them to your own created wrestler so he or she brings them to the ring. How we laughed as our chef-hat-wearing Jamie Oliver lookalike got his face pounded to dust by a very pissed-off Test. Pukka! Of course, you don't just pick them up out of crates, some are sneakily hidden. So to unlock all of Raw's secrets, you'll need to be a true King of the Ring.

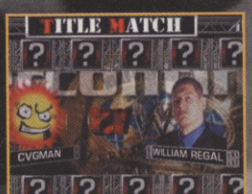
All in all, Raw takes more of a simulation approach and is not pretending to be a major rival to the SmackDown! series, but it has plenty to offer the real hardcore WWF fan as well as the completist gamer who wants to squeeze every last drop out of his cash. THQ currently isn't saying if this is going to get a UK release, but they'd be mad not to.



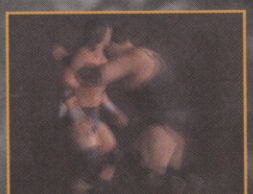
Trish is famous for her big bumps – taking them, that is

SPOILER ALERT

Stop reading. Avert your eyes. Step away from the WWF Raw feature. Still here? Then you must be dying to know just what *is* hidden within the depths of WWF Raw. For winning the WWF Heavyweight, Intercontinental, Hardcore and Women's titles you unlock Limp Bizkit's Fred Durst, Vince MacMahon, Stephanie MacMahon and Shane MacMahon. Attacking Spike Dudley and Triple H as they make their way to the ring will reward you with glasses and a water bottle to arm your wrestler with.

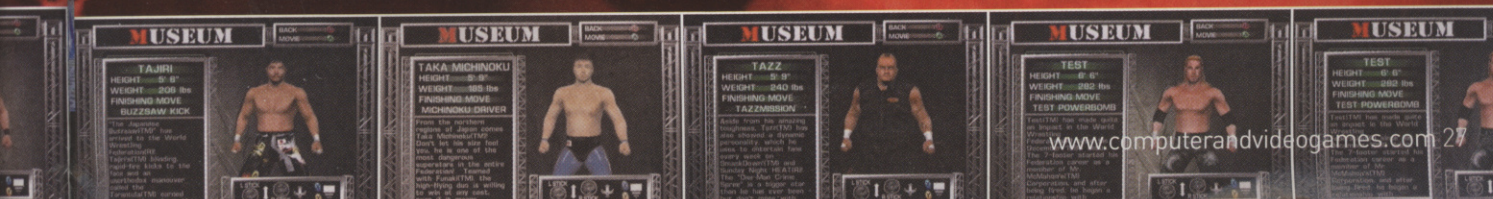


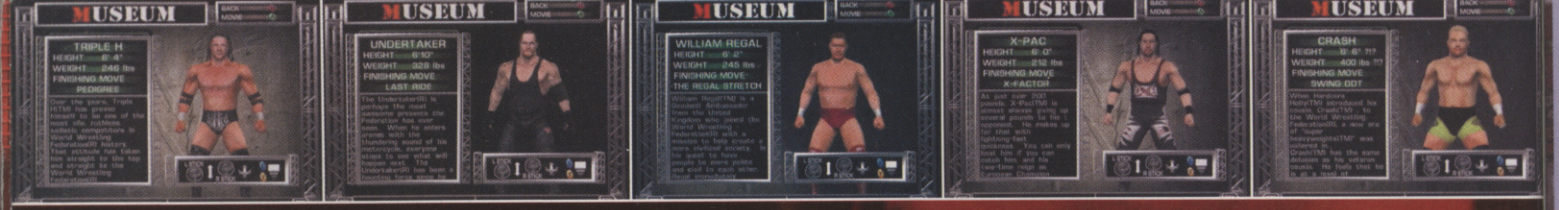
Win the belt and you can unlock Fred Durst



Attack Triple H during his entrance for his bottle

Hit Kurt with his fake medals to get his real ones

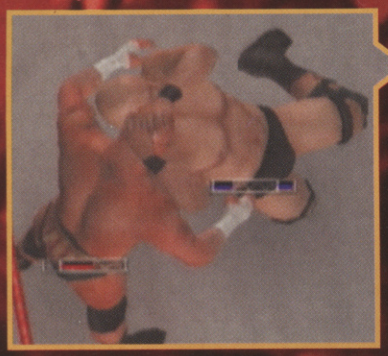




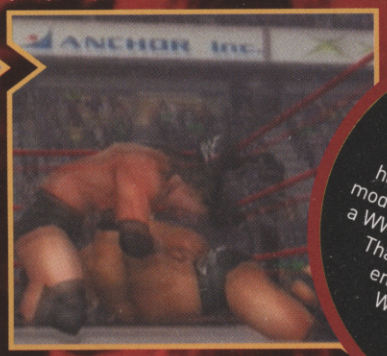
FINISH HIM

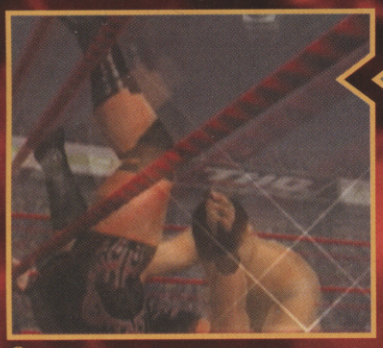
Remember SmackDown!, where all you had to do was hit one button when you'd inflicted enough damage to do your finisher? Well, forget that because now you have to play to the crowd and use ring psychology. You must perform a wide enough variety of moves to get the crowd on your side and the voltage gauge to glow. Then inflict a major move on your opponent to injure him so that he becomes groggy and unstable. Now all you have to do is hook up and hit two buttons together to perform your finisher and take the heat from the crowd.

The Stone Cold Stunner – watch the camera pan around as you do it

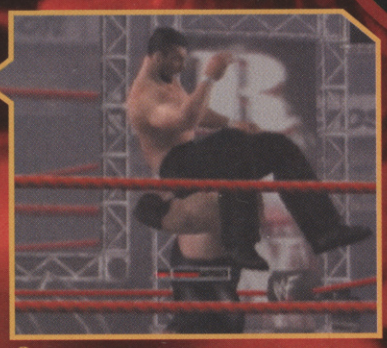


Triple H's Pedigree. If the crowd is pumped up, this fight is over





Taka's Driver – quick, painful and hard to pull off on the heavier guys



Steve Blackman experiences The Last Ride. Looks pervy but probably hurts

OI, ANCHOR!

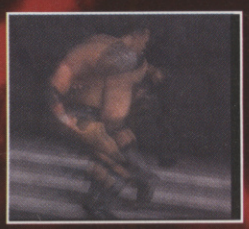
Here's an idea for Raw 2. The Xbox has a CD player and a hard drive, so why not include a mode where we can rip music from a WWF CD to use for the entrance. That way we can update our entrances whenever the WWF releases a new batch of music.

INTERFERENCE

Picture the scene. Your mate is making the most of his entrance, posing his ass off as he moves slowly towards the ring. Annoying, right? Now, you could hope he hits a button to jump in the ring and get on with it, but that's unlikely, right? So how about climbing out of the ring, sprinting up the ramp and kicking his butt right there and then? If nothing else, it'll wipe that smug grin off his face.

Damn! We hate The Rock's entrance. He's a poser!

Hit Y and you can stop him in his tracks

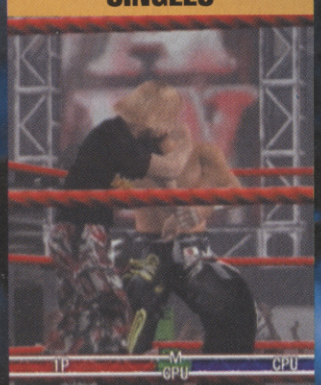


Smack him on the ramp – the crowd love it

MAKE AN EXHIBITION OF YOURSELF

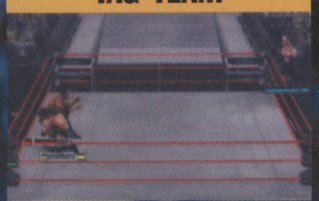
If you don't fancy chasing a title belt there are seven different types of match to crack. Check these babies out...

SINGLES



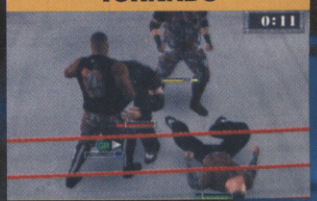
One-on-one. Oh, just twat the bloke on the other side of the ring

TAG TEAM



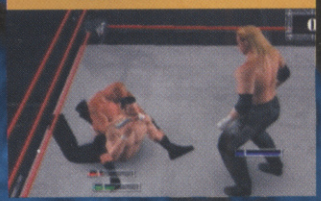
Two of you versus two of them – your partner can be human or AI

TORNADO



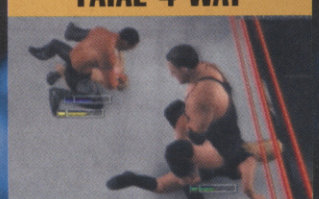
Two against two again, but everyone is in the ring all the time

TRIPLE TREAT



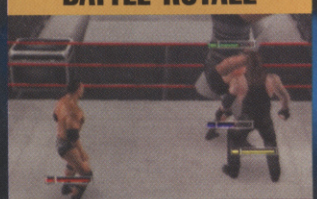
Three characters, all against all, first one to score a pin wins

FATAL 4-WAY



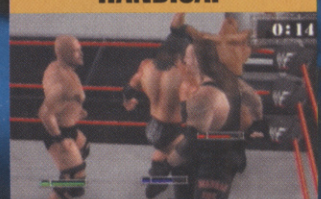
This is the same as Triple Threat but with four characters

BATTLE ROYALE



Four people enter. Last man standing is the winner

HANDICAP



Pitting you against two or three opponents at once. Heavy!

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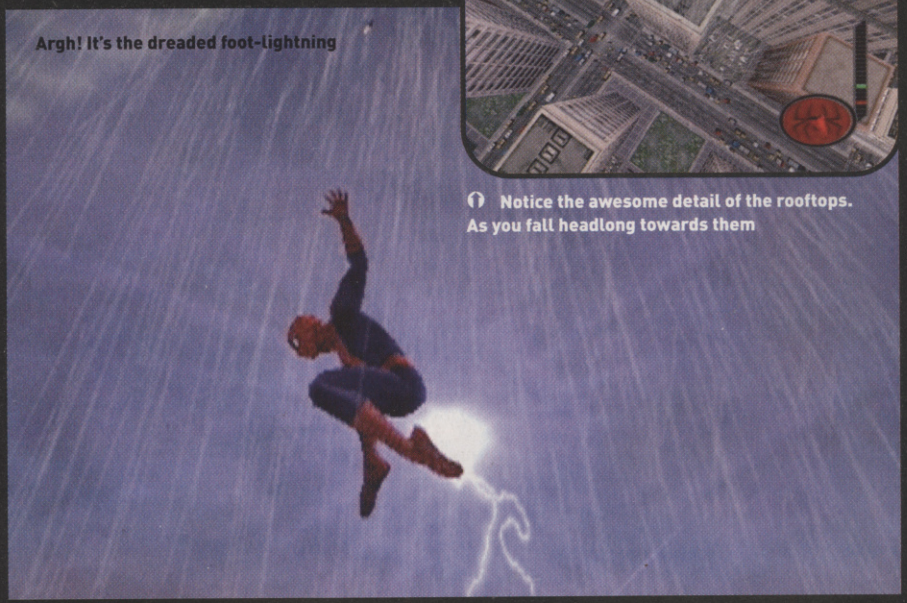
PREVIEWS

SPIDER-MAN: THE MOVIE GAME

FORMAT: **PS2/XBOX/GAMECUBE** OUT: **JUNE 7** DEVELOPER: **TREYARCH** PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**

Spider-Man – not exactly the coolest super-hero, is he? Batman – dresses in rubber, has all the cool gadgets, and is allowed out after dark. Not bad. Hellboy – has horns, a giant metal hand for beating on people and comes from another dimension. Pretty cool. But Spider-Man? Spider-Man is pimple-faced Peter Parker – bitten by a Franken-spider, swings off buildings and lives with his aunt. But while the other superheroes may snigger at him, at least Spidey can claim to have the best games, with this latest adventure set to be the best superhero game ever.

Notice the awesome detail of the rooftops. As you fall headlong towards them



Argh! It's the dreaded foot-lightning

MOVIE MANIA

Based on the summer blockbuster film, Spider-Man: The Movie sees you using your web prowess to battle a freak show of Spidey's best known enemies, culminating in a battle with Martian porn star, the Green Goblin. Like the previous Spidey games on the PSone, this puts you in that classic over-the-shoulder position behind Spidey's head, as you guide him through 23 levels of mayhem. Boss battles, battering hordes of thugs and tricky platform jumps are all in there, just like the PSone games. But that's where the similarity ends.

FLY BOYS

The largest change from the previous games is the addition of aerial combat. Sure, you'll face standard baddies – like Shocker, who throws shockwaves down disused subway tunnels for you to dodge, and Scorpion, with his tail sting. But several of the boss encounters take place above the streets of New York. First you face Vulture then later the Green Goblin in the sky,

You can turn, as well as move up and down your line

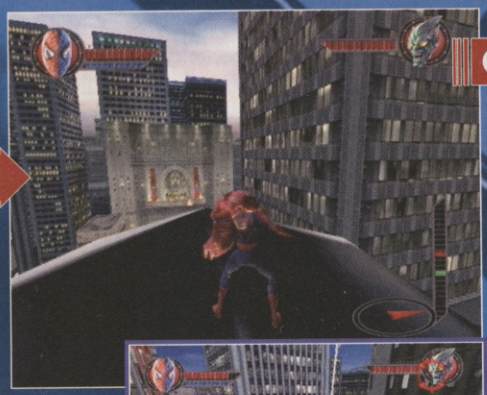
Jump off your line, then pull a punch to smack down your enemies

Fall too far without a line and they'll be taking you home in a bucket

FLY-BY-WIRE

The biggest new feature in Spider-Man? The aerial combats. Now you can swing around above the skyscrapers of New York while battling enemies like the Green Goblin and Vulture. Swing on your line, pull combo attacks in midair, then land on the nearest building for a breather. Sweet.

A giant inflatable panda. But what fresh lunacy is this?



Childhood sweetheart Mary-Jane is strapped to the balloon. Got to get her to safety

That Green Goblin's got to pay. *Really* pay. Time for a few swinging kicks, we think

GO-GO GOBLIN

Norman Osborn's a true wizard in the lab. Shame that he never learnt not to sniff from dangerously toxic beakers full of experimental compounds. Bang! Now he's the Green Goblin, super-intelligent, super-strong and one of the toughest opponents Peter Parker (that's Spider-Man to you) has to face. And here's why...

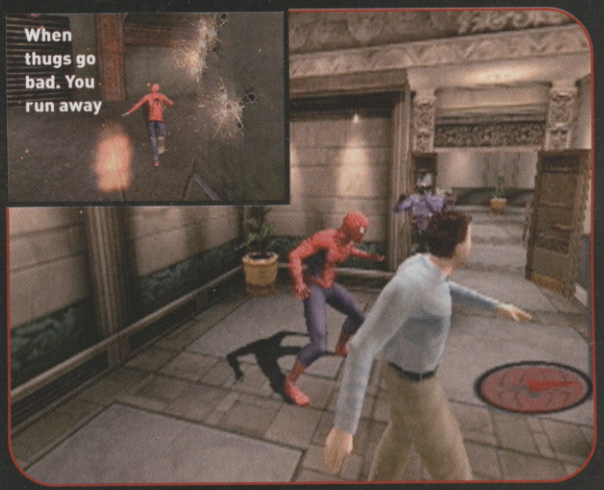
Keep raining kicks, punches and other stuff on Goblin's head

Goblin blows out tower legs. Get them sorted with web stuff before the civilians below get it

while you're swinging about on the end of your web. And unlike in previous Spidey games, that doesn't mean you simply swing from one building to another. Now you can waft about in the air indefinitely, like an eggy fart in a red costume.

You can move up and down your line, turn round the sides of buildings easily, perform swinging kicks while on the line, or jump off to deliver a mid-air punch. You can even jump off your line onto a building then somersault backwards to grapple with your opponent as you both tumble towards the ground, only to zip a line off at the last moment to recover. But that's frankly a bit flash – we'd advise you to stick to swinging, punching and building-hugging.

While you're pulling off the aerial acrobatics, you're fighting bosses who can fly freely too. You'll need to master fighting in three dimensions otherwise your kicks go flying way over your enemy's head. While, strangely enough, their missiles don't.



When thugs go bad. You run away

"I'll hit the thug. You do the boogie"

Pain holds no fear but roaring flames are another matter...

You're not fighting the entire Empire State. Just that guy in green

"It's a movie, it's a game, it's web-slinging mayhem!"

King swinger hits New York

BOSS CATS

The flying boss encounters are designed so that you're not just repeating the same fight at the end of each stage. While Vulture hurls bombs at you, then rests up on a building in between bouts, Goblin-boy tends to scarper before the fisticuffs get serious, leaving you with a mess to deal with.

If he's not kidnapping your childhood sweetheart, he's knocking the support struts off a radio tower or trying to make a bridge between two buildings collapse. Each time he pulls off one of these charming moves it's a race against time to get there quick enough to use your web powers to save the day. Or to watch as loads of innocent people end up as thin-crust street pizza.

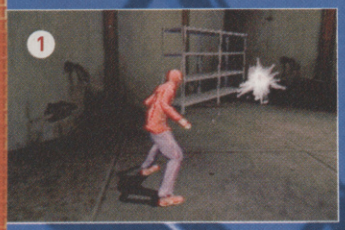
CROUCHING SPIDER

Often you're racing somewhere against the clock, whether it's to stop civilians from being crushed or security guards being battered. That's where your Spider-Sense comes in handy. A weird screen-blur informs you that either your drink's been spiked or someone needs your help. Then your radar points the way for you to go. That's the cue to get into butt-kicking gear.

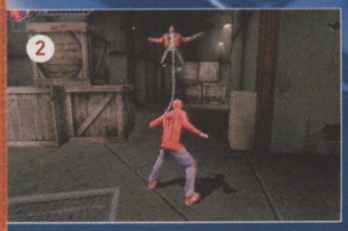
And butt-kicking is now something you do better than ever before. New combo moves take the action beyond kick, punch, kick to include jump, punch, kick and even jump, punch, 'Praying Mantis' Wing-Chung death-blow. On top of the martial arts moves you also get the

FISTS OF FURY

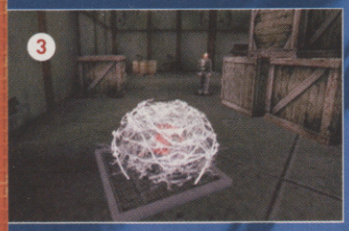
It's not all kick, punch, kick. When it comes to dishing the damage, Spider-Man has a few other weapons up his sleeves. Hit the triangle button to dispense the sticky web stuff, plus a direction to pick which type of spider-weapon you're going to use.



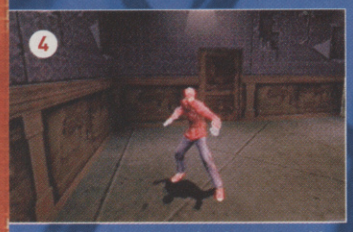
UP: What a balls up. Web balls, that is



DOWN: Pull off this move to send your enemies flying



RIGHT: Cover up with a dome shield... then explode into action



LEFT: Pull on the web-gloves to add some oomph to your upper-cut

web-fluid arsenal of the PSone games. Web lassos that can rope in baddies, the web equivalent of fireballs for long-range shots, and power gloves all feature. Plus you can pick up objects lying around to lob them in the direction of the opposition.

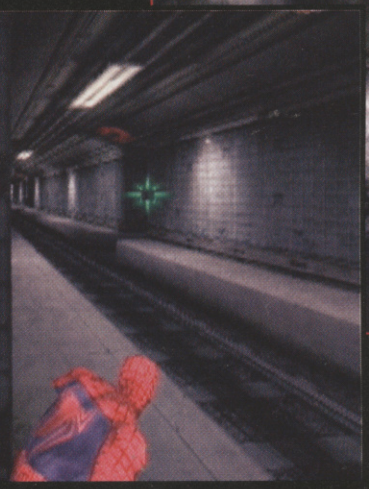
"My Spidey-sense tells me... something bad's about to happen. But where?"

ZIP IT

Getting that direction right is easier than before, thanks to a new 'lock-on' feature. Hit the button and you'll focus, Zelda-style, on the nearest person threatening to break up your party. This works even when you're upside down, swinging from a chandelier. Particularly useful in the levels when you're busting Shocker's gang of jewel thieves. They head straight for the subway, and then to the sewers, which means lots of tight corridors and box-filled rooms to negotiate, as well as a good dry-clean for your costume afterwards.

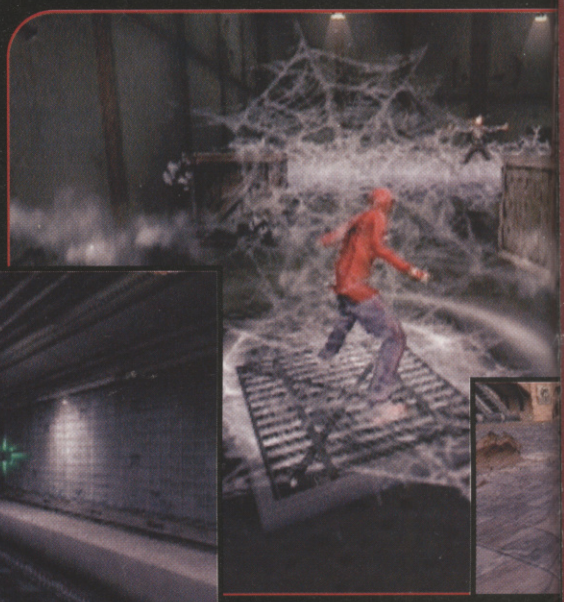
Another new move that's handy for getting around tight spaces fast is the Zip Line. Press down the right analog stick to get a target up, move it to where you want to get to, then hit R1. You shoot out a line and reel yourself in fast. You

"I'm swinging in the rain. Just swinging in the rain"



TIME OUT

The clock's ticking all the time in this game. If it's not the Green Goblin threatening to send a radio tower crashing onto the masses – unless you reinforce the struts in time – it's thugs beating up helpless civilians. Fail to get to them before the KO bell rings and it's game over for you and them.

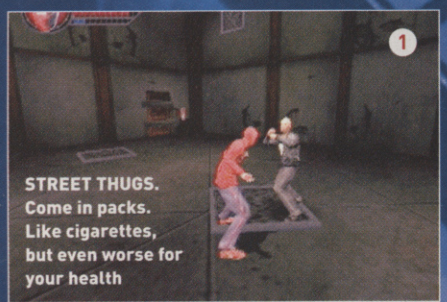


Zip-line to the next siding. Or get flattened by Shocker

Spidey fart gets lit... with disastrous consequences

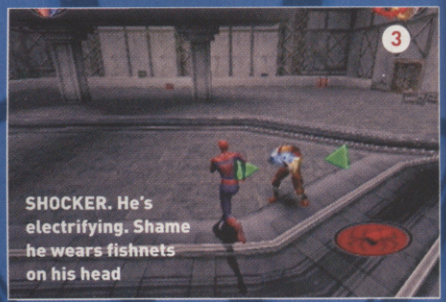
THE USUAL SUSPECT

They're bad, they're mad and they're dangerous to know. These are just some of the guys in Spidey's universe who are out on a mission to get you. And when they're not beating on you, they're invariably beating on innocent civilians. Which just won't do. So pull on your sexy butt-kicking boots, there's work to be done.

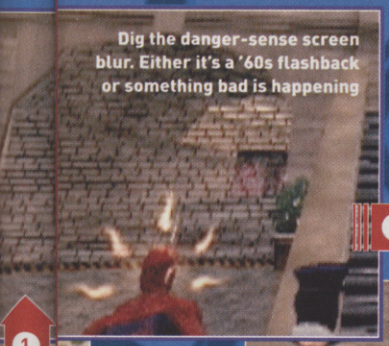


STREET THUGS. Come in packs. Like cigarettes, but even worse for your health

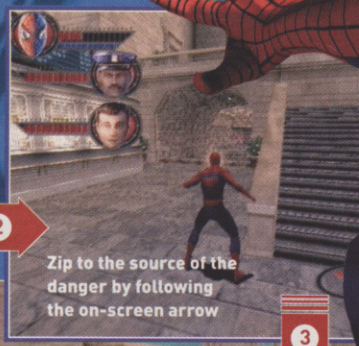
BAD ROBOT. Oscorp Industries sends you its (lethal) compliments



SHOCKER. He's electrifying. Shame he wears fishnets on his head

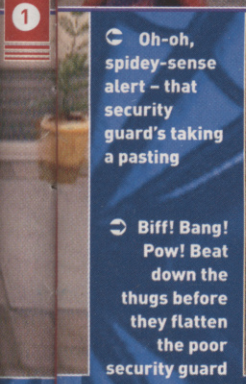


Dig the danger-sense screen blur. Either it's a '60s flashback or something bad is happening

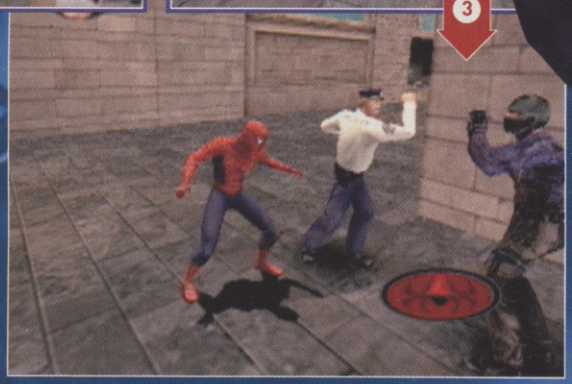


2 Zip to the source of the danger by following the on-screen arrow

1



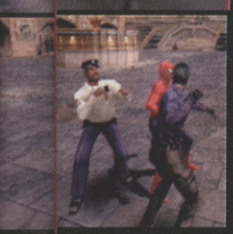
Oh-oh, spidey-sense alert – that security guard's taking a pasting



3

Biff! Bang! Pow! Beat down the thugs before they flatten the poor security guard

Spidey versus Vulture. Vulture tries his hand at the flying can-can move. Impressive



Help civilians beat up thugs. It's fun

can use it to get to innocent civilians fast when they're being beaten up. Or to get through some of the more platform-laden areas – like Vulture's tower lair, where you have to climb the building while avoiding robotic anti-spider mines, swinging logs and trip-wire grenades.

STAY ON TARGET

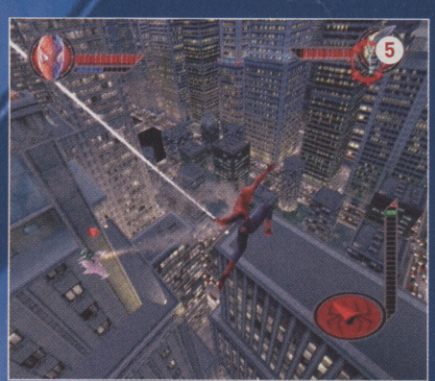
You can use the right-analog targeting stick whenever you want, giving you much more control over the camera than previous Spidey games. Which is handy, because the camera was the worst element of those games. At least here you've got both the targeting and Lock-On modes to help you when the camera decides to show you a blank patch of wall. The graphics are much clearer too, as you'd expect coming from the PS2. Much less fogging, environments with far more detail, and a neat line in dynamic lighting (for example, muzzle-flare from guns light up the room) mean that this looks great.

The only question hanging over Spider-Man: The Movie game is whether the levels will be varied enough to keep you going to the end. But with the inclusion of flying bosses and smarter combat than before, this is shaping up to be one seriously cool web-slinger.

Check out the gorgeous lighting. And kick booty

Vulture down, but not yet out. Note to self: must try harder

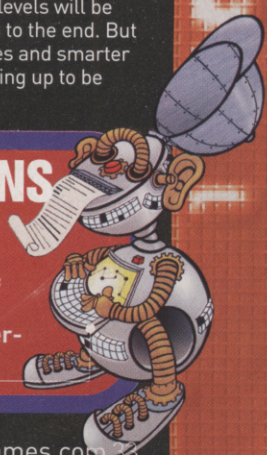
4 VULTURE. The first of the myriad flying goons you get to take out. So make it good!



5 THE GREEN GOBLIN. Played by Willem Defoe in the film. Did we spoil it for ya?

CVG RECKONS

New moves, all-new flying fights and a tip-top graphics engine. If you liked the PSone games, you'll go Spider-crazy for this. **Mark**



"Run for your life, shoot aliens for fun!"

GUNVALKYRIE

FORMAT: **XBOX** OUT: **MAY** DEVELOPER: **SEGA/SMILEBIT** PUBLISHER: **INFOGRAMES**

Make sure your trigger finger is greased and ready for the test of its life, for Sega's incredible Xbox blastathon is primed and almost cleared for take off. It's a shooting frenzy where you don't come up for air until every last alien insect creature's gibs have been splattered about the lushly drawn levels. Running around, tooled up to the teeth, has never looked so good.

Sega and Microsoft make a beautiful baby

The insects swarm at you relentlessly

PERT BUNS, SHINY GUNS

Your special suit adapts and learns new tricks as you collect the relevant cores, giving you incredible screen-shredding firepower and abilities like midair dashes and special attacks.

Warning: you risk getting blinded

Use the lock-on to target loads of aliens at once

The special attacks you earn are tasty rewards

The reflections really are a treat for the retinas – you may need shades to protect you from the dazzle

Each foe you destroy drops a different type of core. Some replenish energy, some give you access to later levels and others power up your woman. Who said girls and guns don't mix?

Most of the action is played on the ground but you can also blast through the air for a limited time, letting you lock on to multiple targets below and unleash hell with your newest upgrade.

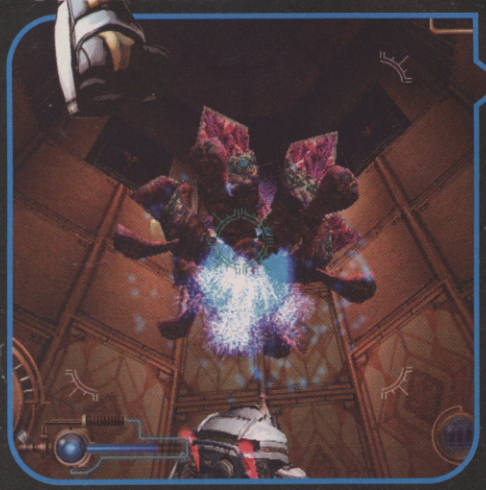
Some shooters suffer the problem of becoming repetitive after a few levels, but we reckon the non-stop power-ups will help make sure this isn't so with GunValkyrie.

CVG RECKONS

Stunning-looking – you will hardly believe your eyes – and sure to please shoot 'em up fans longing for some class blasting action on a next-gen machine. Lee

PORK YOUR PINE

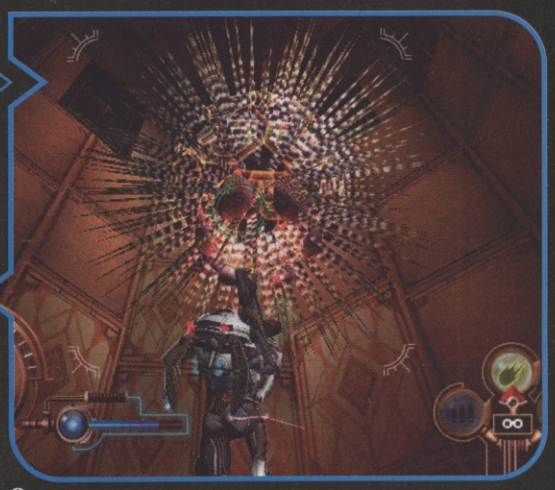
The game isn't anywhere near being finished yet but our two-level preview version was more polished than some finished PS2 games we've seen! We especially loved the spiky porcupine alien boss mutha at the end of Level Two and are assured there will be plenty more incredible boss fights in the final game.



Each boss has a weak point...

...in this case his shiny ass

Peg it, quick, before you get spiked by the 'pine



Whoops. It seems you've made him angry

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PlayStation 2

FROM THE JAPANESE UNDERGROUND...

ANTI-ESTABLISHMENT... PRO-ENTERTAINMENT

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MADE IN JAPAN

FRESH GAMES

ANTI-ESTABLISHMENT... PRO-ENTERTAINMENT

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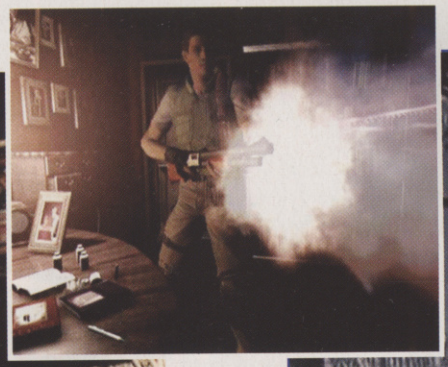
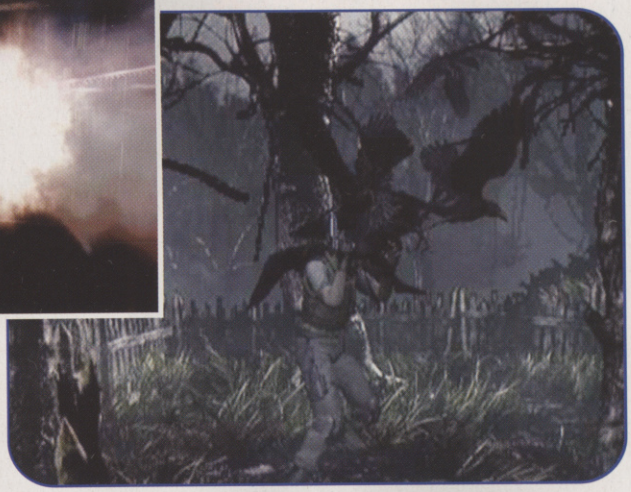
Rebecca is the weakest of the characters you control



It's a game that makes you excited about lighting effects

This many birds flying at you is never a good thing

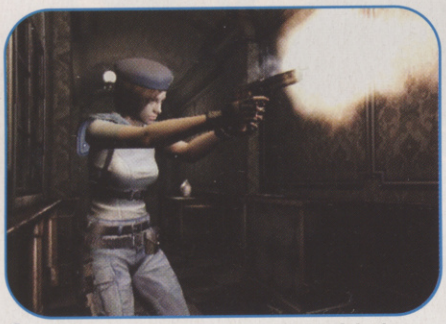


BIOHAZARD (RESIDENT EVIL)

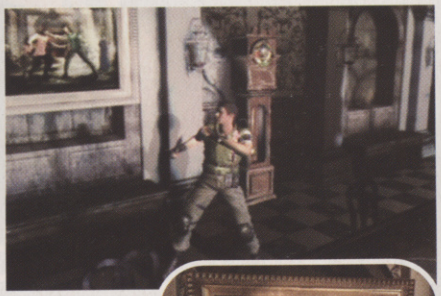
FORMAT: **GAMECUBE** OUT: **NOW (JAPAN)** PLAYERS: **1** DEVELOPER: **CAPCOM** PUBLISHER: **CAPCOM**

We all have our own ideas of beauty. Us CVGers used to think it was the sweet smile of a sultry blonde lounging on a tropical beach, sunlight dappling on her skin, so that she shimmered with an angelic light. But that was before Biohazard on GameCube arrived in our office, fresh from Japan.

Ask any of us for our definition of beauty now and we'll tell you it's the ruby red blood that sprays violently as you sever the main artery of your undead assailant in the most detailed and lushly realised game environments known to man or zombie. The blonde can go jump – bring on the entrails!



Marvel at the detail in the models, right down to the creases in their trousers



The lightning flashes to help tip your nerves over the edge

Paintings often reveal clues

Ouch! You know these sharp spikes are just waiting to bury themselves in your flesh

ON THE MENU

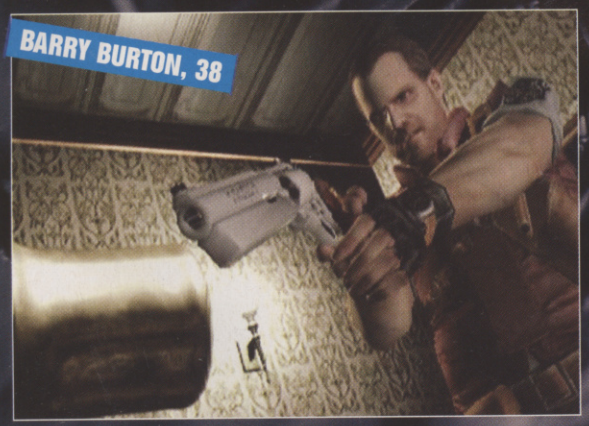
The undead just love the sweet and gamey tang of human flesh – more so than Elvis loved his deep fried hamburgers, apparently. Mmmm!

Here, we introduce the five members of STARS Alpha Team. Any one of them could end up as dinner before the night is through.

Burly all-round action hero who starts with only a knife. Can only carry six items too

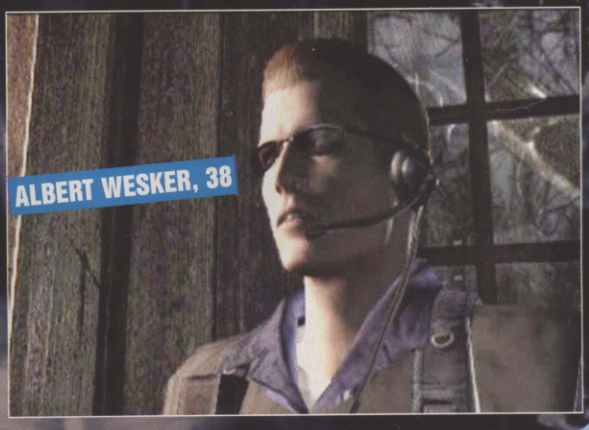
Unlike Chris, Jill starts with a pistol and can carry an extra two objects. The beginner's choice

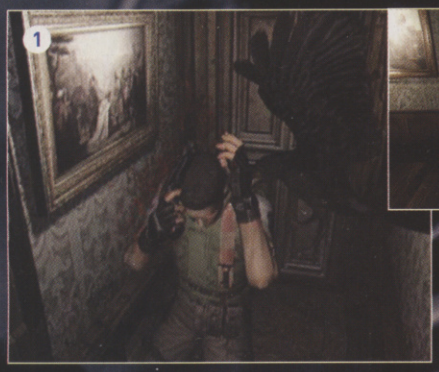
Still a rookie but capable enough. Rebecca is the only other playable character in the game

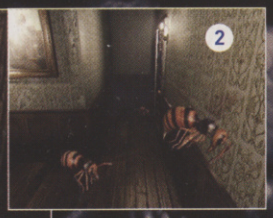


A seasoned officer with loads of experience, who is nevertheless overwhelmed by the horror in the mansion

The STARS mission leader is shifty. If you've played CODE: Veronica you'll know a lot more about this fella...





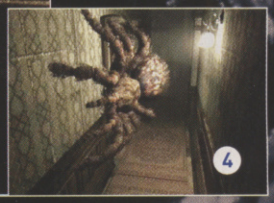


Waps are faster than the birds, and with poison attacks!

Difficult to aim at – the birds are deadly

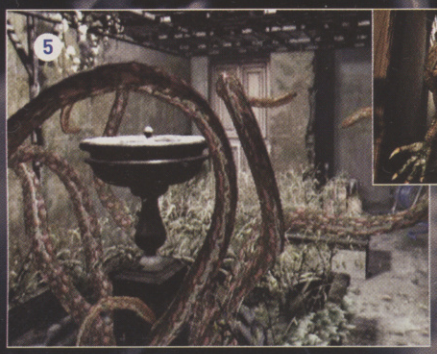
Avoid snakes – they may be venomous

The mansion is an arachnophobe's nightmare



THEY'RE HUNGRY, SO HUNGRY

The Biohazard mansion houses many mouths. You'll no doubt be expecting zombies and devil dogs, but far more horrific creatures are lurking deep within the depths of the game. Ammo is scarce, health refills are rare and when the bad guys bite, they really leave a mark. Our advice? Run like the clappers!



Tentacles want to feel you up, but in a bad way

The Hunters are slow and shambling, but their claws are fatal

Don't wait to find out what it is... just run like hell

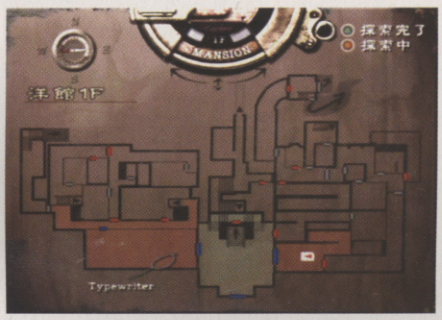
UNBELIEVABLE

The GameCube version of the historic first Resident Evil game is astonishing. Using the first game's rock-solid base as a starting point, Capcom has created a game that supersedes the original in every possible way, while cranking up the incredible tension and terrifying atmosphere of menace and doom to near unbearable levels.

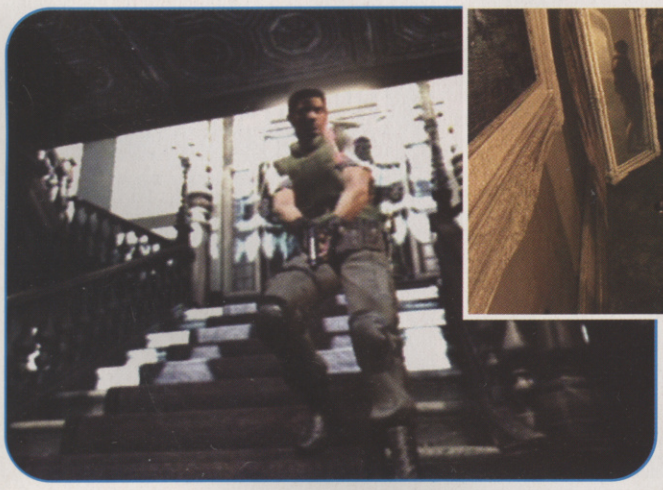
The biggest and most drastic enhancement is the look of the game. Biohazard still uses pre-rendered static backdrops but they are alive with a level of detail and a jaw-dropping graphical finesse that could never be achieved using a 3D engine.

You just know that Chris is thinking about climbing the fence and bolting

You've got a long way to go – best get busy



"Gore and misery – are you sure it's on Cube?!"



Sometimes the zombies won't spot you so sneaking is worth a try

Instead of triggering a loading scene, you can climb stairs in the game engine

Explosions of lightning blast in through the windows, bathing each of the ornately decorated rooms in ghostly light. Your heroes' shadows stretch and warp around corners and along corridors as they respond, in real time, to the flickering glow of the lamps and candles burning in the darkness.

The motion-captured characters themselves are stunningly animated and the expressions on their faces as they creep around the house, alert and apprehensive, help draw you into the game more so than in any Resi adventure before.

DEFENCE IS EVERYTHING

It's gorgeous, but Biohazard has had much more than just a graphical overhaul. Whole new areas of the mansion now yawn up in front of you where there were only dead ends and blocked passages before. With new areas

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Shove the statue off the balcony and watch it smash to reveal a secret below

come new puzzles and they're beautifully varied and add further frightening freshness to the game. In addition to the standard object-hunting conundrums, there are now crueller contests to win, like derailing a statue with vicious spinning knives attached before it makes STARS sushi out of you.

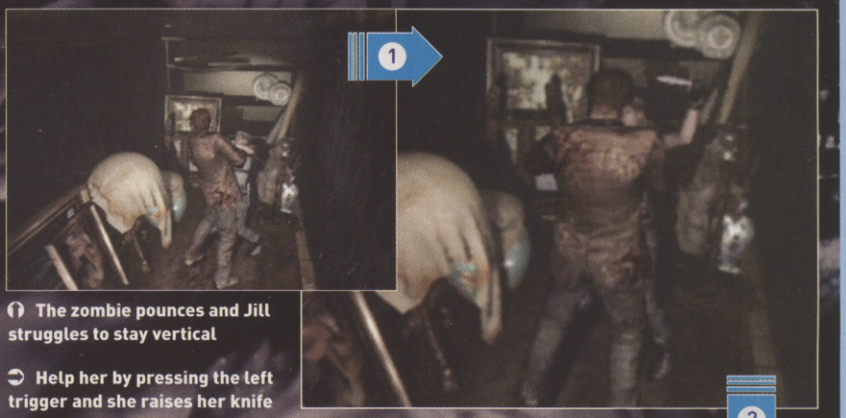
Comfortingly, the gameplay remains instantly familiar. You choose either Jill or Chris as your main character from the start of the game, and you get a slightly different adventure, depending on who you pick. The

Hold down the right shoulder button in order to ready your hero for attack

one key addition to the actual meat of the gameplay, aside from the terrific new puzzles, is the way you now collect one-shot defence items, like daggers and grenades. By equipping one in readiness on the inventory screen, you can use it to help destroy an attacking creature when engaged in potentially fatal close combat. Tactical application of these single-use items can mean the difference between getting out alive and dying the most painful of deaths and having to reload that last save from ages ago.

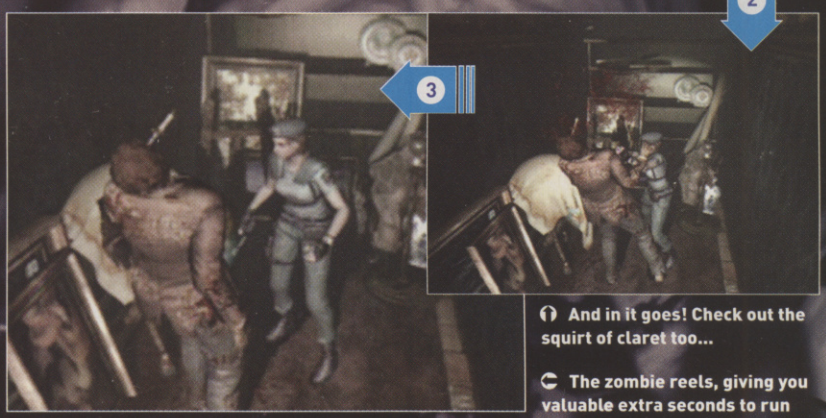
FRUITY NEW DEFENCES

One of most significant new features in GameCube Biohazard is the way you can now defend yourself with single-use weapons and items. When wrestling with a zombie, you can now slam the left shoulder button to use the currently selected defence item. Pop the daggers that you find into zombies' heads to core them like rotting apples, or stick a grenade in their mouths and stand back as their heads pop from the exploding pineapple in their maw. It's beautiful.



The zombie pounces and Jill struggles to stay vertical

Help her by pressing the left trigger and she raises her knife



And in it goes! Check out the squirt of claret too...

The zombie reels, giving you valuable extra seconds to run

FEAR GUARANTEED

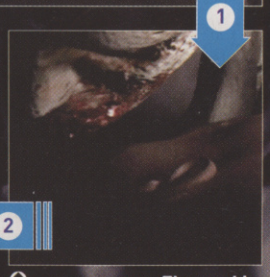
What's most impressive about Biohazard is the fearsome atmosphere it generates. Within the first few minutes of play, before you even get a sniff of your first zombie, you'll be terrified. The added visual effects and reworked musical score are put to incredible use, making you think you're being watched, that something could be lurking just around the next corner. And for this atmosphere to be even stronger now, after five years of Resi games and countless imitations, is a near miracle.

With the promise of more remade Resi sequels and an entirely new Resi adventure, the future of GameCube, as a platform for all types of game and as a machine for every type of games fan, is surely guaranteed.

EVEN MORE HORRIBLE

The unforgettable first glimpse of zombie has been gored-up to the max for Biohazard on GameCube. The game is full of many a nasty scene, to inspire teeth-chattering dread, and we reckon it's heading for an '18' rating.

You see the creature's busy with something...



...or someone. The zombie stops snacking and blood drips from his mouth

That's real fear on the zombie prey's face

Sniffing fresh meat, the zombie turns to attack you. Run!

CVG RECKONS

With sublime visuals, brand new gameplay features and an atmosphere so intense it'll give you white knuckles as you grip the joypad, Biohazard is far more than just a remake and is sure to be an essential purchase for anyone who owns ta GameCube. **Lee**

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MR DRILLER GREAT

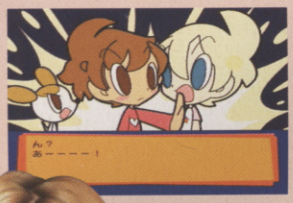
FORMAT: **PSONE** OUT: **TBC** DEVELOPER: **NAMCO** PUBLISHER: **TBC**

In terms of pure videogame goodness, Driller G has to be the greatest thing around. What's that? Namco is looking for a UK publisher for Driller G? Pray that this happens soon, okay?

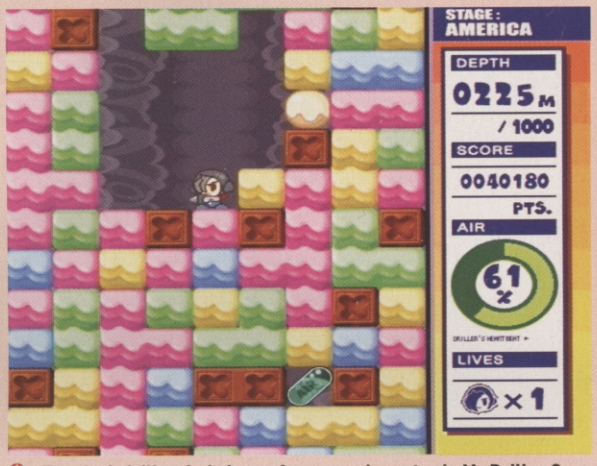
TWO-PLAYER DRILLER = GOOD

Oh yes! The only thing that prevented Mr Driller from scoring 10/10 the first time around was the absence of two-player Driller. Now you get a choice of Versus modes: Driller Race or Driller Survival. The first is frantic:

It's small but really good fun



Follow a story and win trials in RPG mode



The dark driller dude is our fave new character in Mr Driller G

Choose your drilling dynamo in Versus mode

you just have to dig to the bottom before the other guy. In Survival you get to use a range of really funky power-ups that give you the advantage. Both modes are a blast (note to self: must play them again after writing this).

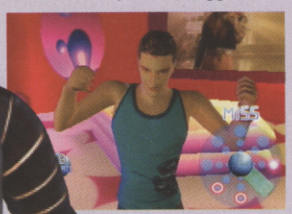
You can also take Mr Driller (Susumu) on an adventure to save the world and find hidden treasure. Scenario Driller means more digging, but the missions vary your tactics and feature cool Driller cartoons.

Last but not least, Mission Driller, the one-player game, now challenges you to reach a depth of 20,000 metres. Scary as hell, but you'll die trying, we swear it.

CVG RECKONS

This is truly the White Stripes of videogames. Discover it and you'll be the coolest, no arguments. Paul

Nice vest, mate (snigger)

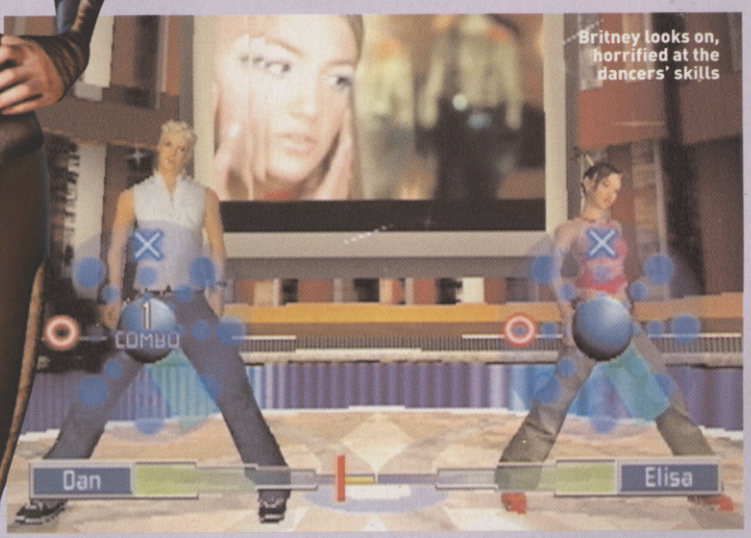


BRITNEY'S DANCE BEAT

FORMAT: **PS2/PC** OUT: **MAY** DEVELOPER: **METRO GRAPHICS** PUBLISHER: **THQ**

Maybe you worship at the altar of Marilyn Manson. Or you like moshing to Slipknot. There might be nothing you enjoy more than sticking pins into wax dolls in the shape of those muppets from Blue and pelting eggs at the kids queueing for S Club 7 tickets. Okay, you detest all things 'pop'. But hate Miss Britney Spears? Never!

Unsurprisingly, Britney's Dance Beat is a rhythm action game. Surprisingly, you don't play as the pop goddess herself. Instead you get to be one of a bunch of wannabe dancers with painful fixed grins, dressed in tight spangly clothing and with a strong, slightly unnatural desire to be in Britney's troupe of dancing dummies.



The bar along the bottom shows who's winning

MONEY MAKER SHAKER

Each stage takes the form of a one-on-one audition, or battle, taking place against the

The sparkly effects mean you're trashing your rival

Would you like fries with that, Sir?

GEOFF CRAMMOND'S GRAND PRIX 4

FORMAT: **XBOX/PC** OUT: **MAY/JUNE** DEVELOPER: **SIMERGY/MICROPOSE** PUBLISHER: **INFOGRAMES**

Playing Geoff Crammond's Grand Prix 4 is like reading your first porn mag: it's about as close as you're going to get to the real thing bar actually slipping into the driving seat for some first-hand experience. It's hardcore.

Grand Prix 4 is also hard, damned hard, in fact. The realism is such that you'll probably spend the first 10 minutes skidding over grass and visiting the crash barriers. Persevere with it, though, and you'll soon find yourself on track on the tarmac and experiencing the game as it's meant to be.

There's a great sense of speed and power as you hurtle around the circuits, and the car handling is spot on. All the racing car tweaks that you could ever ask for are in there too, and the inclusion of a system called GPaedia helps you in your mission to hone your machine to near-perfection.

'Nothing Comes Closer' is Grand Prix 4's tag line, and that pretty much sums it up.

Idiot's left his burger on the tail fin

All the circuits are highly detailed

The definitive T-cam view. It had to be

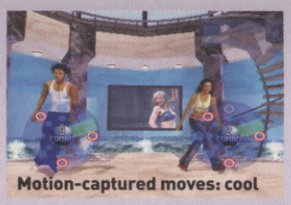
Seems bananas are in this year

Feel the need for speed

CVG RECKONS

F1 racing at its purest, Grand Prix 4 is more likely to appeal to the hardcore rather than the casual racer. **Stuart**

This is Dan. A remarkable likeness to CVG's own Dan...

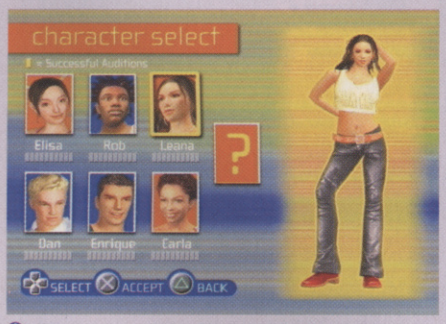


Motion-captured moves: cool

Check out our 50 hit combo

musical backdrop of one of La Spears's pop smashes. A wheel-like gauge on your half of the screen shows you what buttons to press and when. By performing especially well, you can send extra button combos across to your rival's wheel, and even rearrange them to create comical choreographed confusion.

Gameplay is as simple and as shallow as any other rhythm action game's, but with the added treat of genuine Britney tunes and actual pop video footage of the pert princess writhing around in time to the beats. Oh, stop drooling.



Choose your fame-hungry wannabe here

CVG RECKONS

Enjoyable battles, cool music and Britney Spears is in it, for heaven's sake! We hope they put more songs in though. **Lee**

FINGER BRITNEY ON THE FLY

Britney's got her eyes on your pocket. The songs for the GBA version have been stripped bare of vocals, save for a few samples, but with headphones it's still pretty funky. Our preview version only used the A and B buttons though, so it might be a bit simplistic.

Your eyes will mainly focus on the wheel

Brit goes for the 'chocolate starfish' move

Yagyu makes the schoolboy error of putting his hand into a tiger's mouth

The opening exchanges of the game set the tone: lots of violence

An all-new pantomime audience shouts "They're behind you!" to help out

ONIMUSHA 2: SAMURAI'S DESTINY

FORMAT: PS2 OUT: OCTOBER DEVELOPER: CAPCOM PUBLISHER: CAPCOM

The CG intro for the ninja character Fuma Kotaro redefines mint

It's never a good idea to stroll about in a mine, but add in eight spiky lizard men who roll at you like giant ninja stars and things go from bad to worse.

When they're close enough, the lizard men slash you with their swords. You fight them off with frantic swings of your blade, each kill filling the air with mysterious orbs. Suck up a few purple ones and the demon inside you is unleashed. You glow blue and your sword starts to shoot lightning.

For a short time you're a demon killing machine and your problems are solved. Your sword deals fatal blows every time, and homing firebolts leap from the blade. The star of Onimusha 2 has obviously been taking lessons from Dante in Devil May Cry.

Everything that's blue is demonic. Including the boy band

...along with everyone else in the village

Demon power is not all that's new in Capcom's slasher sequel. The backgrounds may be pre-rendered again, but they've been subtlely animated to make them look alive. You can whine about 3D backgrounds all you want, but there's no way running water could have looked this impressive done any other way.

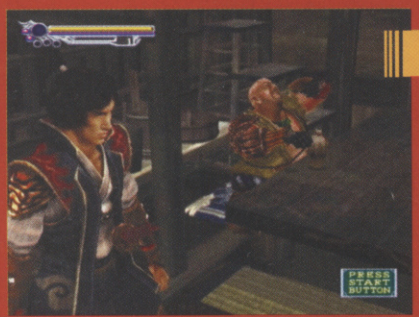
SPINNING AROUND

But back to the gameplay. This is a Capcom sequel, so you're probably not expecting a massive shift in how the game plays. New hero Jubei Yagyu rotates on the spot to turn, but attacks with the ferocity of one hundred tigers. Mashing the buttons hacks enemies into the air, and the magic attacks channel elemental forces through your blade and shred enemies in a lightning storm.

The arch enemy this time around is the evil warlord Oda Nobunaga, making a comeback from the last game. Ten years after the events of Onimusha 1, Nobunaga leads a troop of samurai into the peaceful village of Imashou and torches it to the ground. Women and children are massacred, and the whole chain of events is captured in an intro movie that sets Square-

WANNA BE IN MY GANG?

You'll get well and truly leathered in Onimusha 2 if you go it alone. Stacks more enemies have been included in Samurai's Destiny and they're more lethal than ever. So make sure you make some friends.



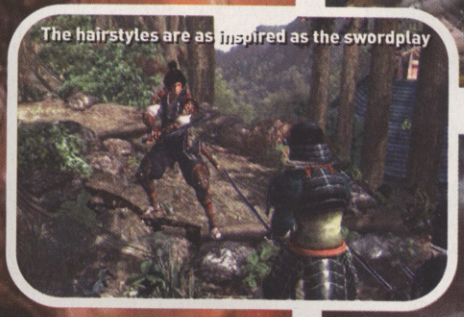
Meet Ekei. He likes eating and getting lashed

Buy some grog for your new buddy. He'll be very grateful

In the heat of battle, Ekei arrives to lend a hand. Phew!

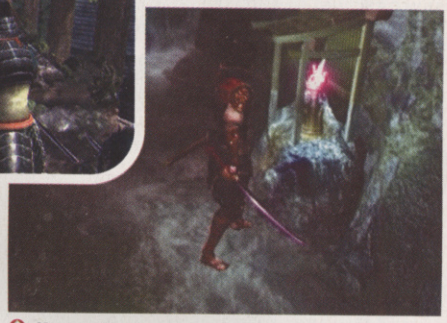
The two of you together will soon cane this boss

Evil warlord Oda Nobunaga is the villain. And you thought you'd got rid of him in the first game. Fool!



The hairstyles are as inspired as the swordplay

The bosses are really cool



Yagyu, the simpleton, gets distracted by fire

"Slash and maim – now with added demon power"

Buy items and recruit help in the village

beating standards of excellence. Yagyu swears vengeance, and the game begins.

The movie introduces four new characters. Fat spear expert Ekei, learned gun fighter Magoichi, ninja warrior Fuma Kotaro and token lady fighter Oyu (seen naked in the CG, naturally) will cross your path during the game, and a few cleverly thought-out gifts will earn you their favour. Head down to the village in the game, and you'll meet the many residents who'll happily chat to you RPG-style. There's also a shop, where you buy stuff to get the mercenaries to help you out.

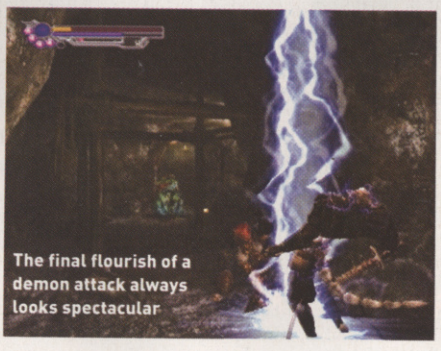
WEIRD SCENES INSIDE THE GOLD MINE

With a gold mine on the outskirts of the village there are plenty of nuggets lying around. Buy a few bottles of wine and find Ekei and he'll be your mate. He won't tag around with you, but he'll arrive in the nick of time if you're taking a kicking. The first boss battle is against a man/spider hybrid in the gold mine, who's virtually impossible to nail on your own. Just as your health bar enters the fatal stages, Ekei arrives and starts distracting the beast.

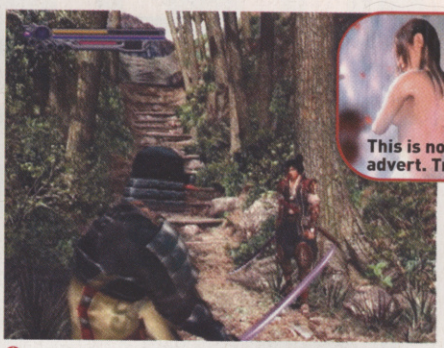
There's a real actor cast as the hero this time around as well: a celebrated Japanese actor who died back in 1989. Yusaku Matsuda is best known over here for a role he played alongside Michael Douglas in the 1989 Yakuza mob movie Black Rain. From what we've seen of Onimusha 2, this is a fitting tribute to his memory.

Boy or girl? We can't tell

The mines are full of disgusting creatures



The final flourish of a demon attack always looks spectacular



This is not a shampoo advert. Trust us

The 3D backgrounds do the PS2 proud

CVG RECKONS

Still pre-rendered and the gameplay is familiar, but it's more violent, more engrossing and looks amazing. **Dean**

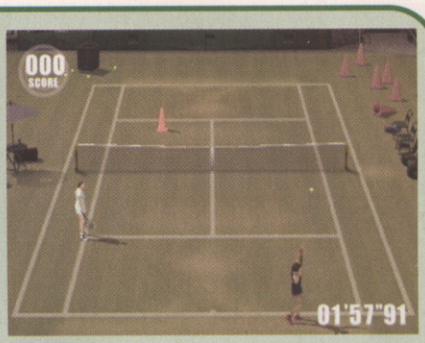
SMASH COURT TENNIS: PRO TOURNAMENT

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **JUNE** DEVELOPER: **NAMCO** PUBLISHER: **SONY**

Whether you're a Virtua Tennis virtuoso or a ball-thumping novice nincompoop, getting to grips with the action in Smash Court is easier than copping off with that pole-dancing minger from Club Reps. So if you've never stepped foot on a tennis court but fancy playing like you were born with a silver racquet in your gob, look no further than Smash Court Tennis: Pro Tournament.

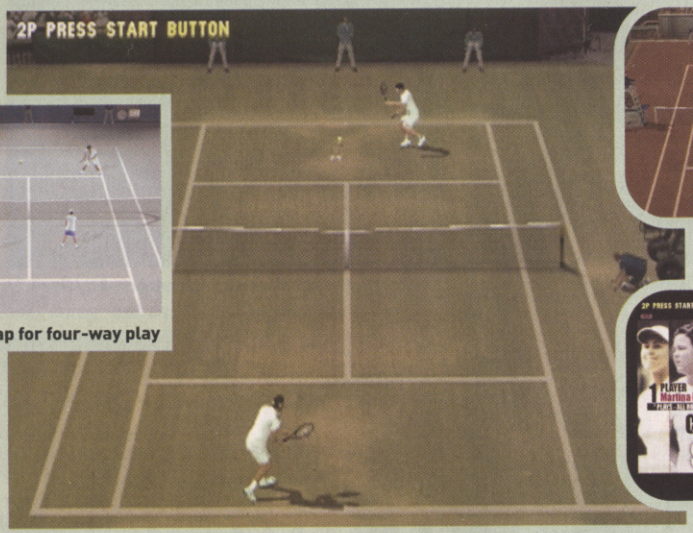
RIGHT BACK ATCHA!

There you are, playing as little Timmy Henman against Man-monkey Sampras. He's stood on the baseline, punching cross-court ground strokes at you. But instead of crumpling under the pressure of his onslaught, you retaliate with a well-placed drop shot to lure him into the net, then follow up with a textbook lob to win the point. And it's only your second go on the game.

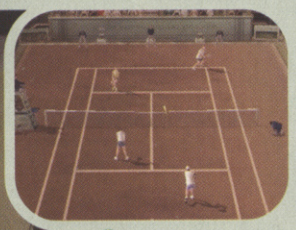


Hit targets and complete challenges

Unlike the Virtua Tennis series, in Super Smash Court it's damn easy to land shots to near enough wherever you want in your opponent's half, almost regardless of how well your opponent's doing in a rally. This apparent lack of balance might anger VT fans as you don't have to work very hard to hit a winner, but on the flipside it means Smash Court bridges the gap between expert and novice players. Check out next issue for the full lowdown.

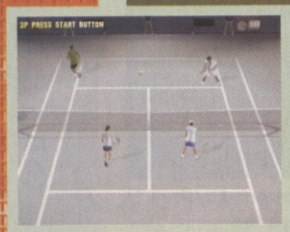


All the major Grand Slam tournaments have been included



Returning a smash is a hit-and-hope affair

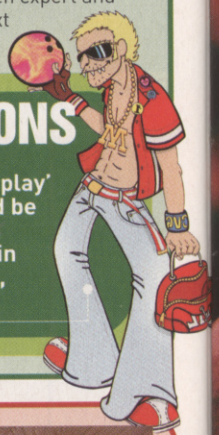
Choose to play with the likes of Agassi



Use a Multitap for four-way play

CVG RECKONS

Simple 'pick up and play' action, which should be ideal for tennis fans of all abilities. Just in time for Wimbledon, too. Mike



MORROWIND: THE ELDER SCROLLS III

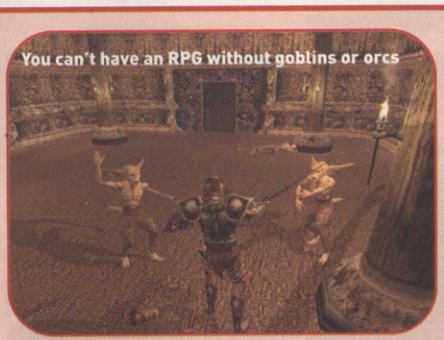
FORMAT: **XBOX/PC** OUT: **JUNE** DEVELOPER: **BETHESDA SOFTWORKS** PUBLISHER: **UBISOFT**

The goblin-bashing, mage-mashing realm of role-playing may not be everybody's cup of tea, but Morrowind could change that. Set in a massive world featuring glorious graphics, an ingenious real-time weather system and a stunning night/day cycle, it's the kind of game that screams innovation.

GRAND AXE AUTO

Put simply, Morrowind is the GTAIII of the role-player genre. Play the game by the book and complete the quests as they're laid out before you. Or alternatively, totally disregard all the rules and go wild. If you want to kill every last man, woman and beast that populates the game's 30 or so towns and villages, then go ahead. If you fancy living in the woods as a kind of insane hermit, picking mushrooms for the rest of your life, go for it. Whatever you want to do, and however you want to play it, it's totally up to you.

Morrowind looks set to be a spanking introduction to role-players on the Xbox. The orcs are unleashed in June.

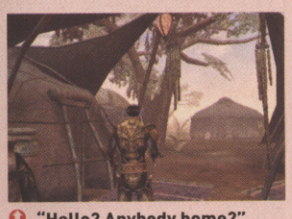


You can't have an RPG without goblins or orcs

Anybody want mushrooms on their pizza?

Weapons and armour? You're in the right place...

Warning: dangerously immersive game

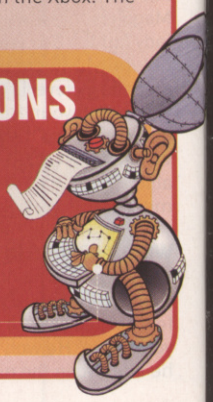


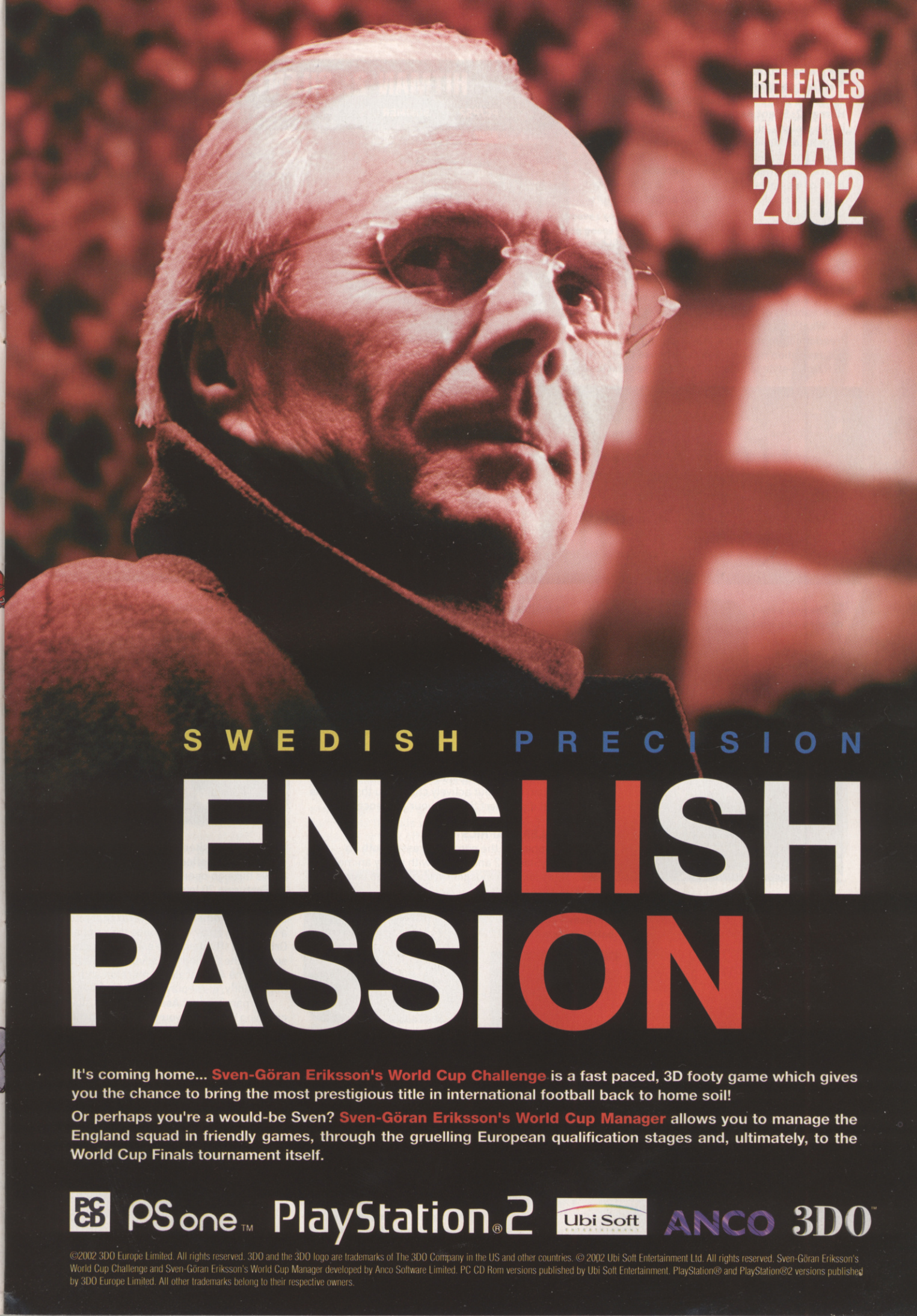
"Hello? Anybody home?"

The graphics are some of the best seen in an RPG on any format

CVG RECKONS

If role-playing is to make an impact on Xbox, Morrowind could well be the game that strikes the first mail-fisted blow. Keith




RELEASES
MAY
2002
SWEDISH PRECISION
ENGLISH
PASSION
It's coming home... Sven-Göran Eriksson's World Cup Challenge is a fast paced, 3D footy game which gives you the chance to bring the most prestigious title in international football back to home soil!
Or perhaps you're a would-be Sven? Sven-Göran Eriksson's World Cup Manager allows you to manage the England squad in friendly games, through the gruelling European qualification stages and, ultimately, to the World Cup Finals tournament itself.
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PS one™
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©2002 3DO Europe Limited. All rights reserved. 3DO and the 3DO logo are trademarks of The 3DO Company in the US and other countries. © 2002 Ubi Soft Entertainment Ltd. All rights reserved. Sven-Göran Eriksson's World Cup Challenge and Sven-Göran Eriksson's World Cup Manager developed by Anco Software Limited. PC CD Rom versions published by Ubi Soft Entertainment. PlayStation® and PlayStation®2 versions published by 3DO Europe Limited. All other trademarks belong to their respective owners.

HITMAN 2: SILENT ASSASSIN

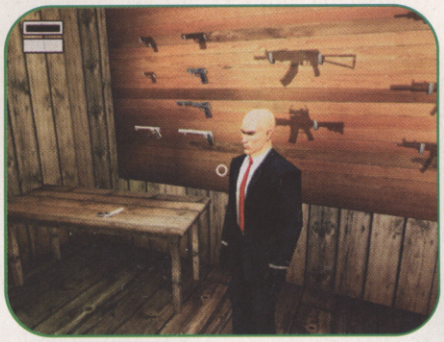
FORMAT: **PC/PS2** OUT: **SUMMER** DEVELOPER: **IO INTERACTIVE** PUBLISHER: **EIDOS INTERACTIVE**

Being a ruthless hired killer is a tough job, but someone has to do it. Preferably someone with a shiny, buffed-up slaphead. Hitman 2: Silent Assassin plants you securely in the violent, blood-stained shoes of Agent 47, a bald, cold-hearted mercenary, created by advanced genetic technology and stamped with a supermarket-friendly barcode on the back of his pale neck.

This first- and third-person action adventure begins at a Sicilian monastery where our hero has hung up his sniper rifle, having decided to retire from his previous life of neck snapping, trigger pulling and knife twisting. However, after his friend Father Vittorio is kidnapped by Mafia goons, Agent 47 has to re-embark on his deadly career to discover the whereabouts of the missing priest.

What's so unique about Hitman 2 is the freedom it promises the player during each assassination mission. You can choose to storm in Rambo-style to take out targets, use vehicles to infiltrate building compounds, plant remote-controlled bombs or actually steal characters' clothes to disguise yourself and get within strangling/poisoning/shooting distance of your target. This involves sneaking up behind a poor victim, garrotting him with fibre wire and stripping him of his clobber.

Hitman 2 has been designed so that as the player, you feel you are part of a living, breathing game world, in which guards will remember if they've spotted you and bodies will remain where you dragged them. AI is disturbingly real, so guards don't just patrol certain areas but actively chase you through the level if you alert them to your presence.



Weapons collected in missions are stored in Agent 47's garden shed. More interesting than flowerpots

The sniper rifle. Every hitman's essential bit of kit

"Garrotte your victim and strip him of his clothes!"

The first ever peeping-tom sim?

Choose the first- or third-person view

KILLER GRAPHICS

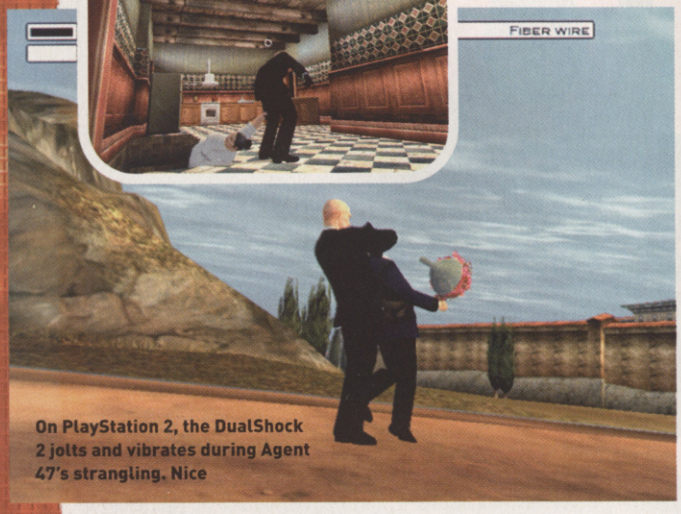
Graphically, the game impresses both on PlayStation 2 and on PC, with nicely animated cutscenes, atmospheric level design using impressive architecture, and magnificent environmental effects – for example, snow blows through open windows into buildings.

Featuring 20 levels set in realistic locations, which include Japan, Malaysia and the Middle East among others, a cast of 70 characters and a score played by the Budapest Symphony Orchestra, IO Interactive's killer epic could surpass the original PC adventure Hitman: Codename 47 in scale, immersion and, most importantly, gameplay.

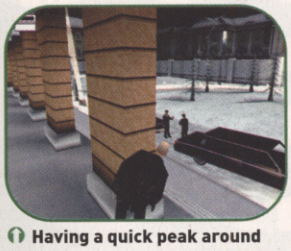
Hitman 2: Silent Assassin will be slowly creeping up behind you very soon, so make sure you watch your backs...

Can you get frostbite of the whole head? If so, this bare-bonce is a prime candidate

Oops. One Babycham too many – again... She better come with me



On PlayStation 2, the DualShock 2 jolts and vibrates during Agent 47's strangling. Nice



Having a quick peak around walls and pillars allows you to check out the opposition

The stained glass windows stream coloured light on Agent 47 as he walks past them. Cool!

CVG RECKONS

A very promising stealth 'em up that could have enough atmosphere, black humour and killer action to sate the most psychopathic of gamers. **Jamie**

The first level boss may be shy about showing her face, but her love bumps are another matter

Brucie does his Snake impression. As well as chop socky mayhem, there's stealth action to be had

A few slick moves soon take out the attacking goons

Yes, nunchukas! Beat your foes repeatedly in the face with hard wooden sticks. Sweet

Make like a banana and don Bruce's famous yellow jumpsuit

BRUCE LEE: QUEST OF THE DRAGON

FORMAT: **XBOX** OUT: **AUTUMN 2002**
DEVELOPER: **RONIN ENTERTAINMENT** PUBLISHER: **VIVENDI**

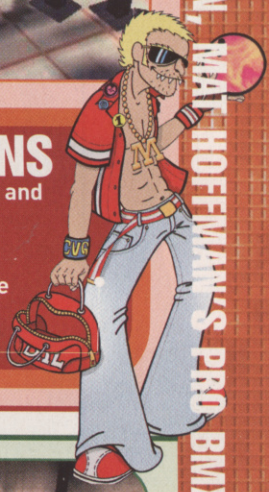
He might have been dead for over 20 years, decomposed and riddled with maggots, but what makes you think that'll stop him? Reincarnated for this next gen fisticuffs extravaganza, the martial arts legend has been seamlessly pieced back together and is looking slicker, faster and meaner than ever.

Kung Fu plots have never been famed for their depth and sophistication: your dad's been kidnapped and the bad guys have nicked off with a Golden Relic that holds the key to ancient martial arts secrets, and it's your job to get the old man back and retrieve the relic. Deep! But what Quest Of The Dragon lacks in storytelling, it makes up for in spades when it comes to multiple-attacker beat 'em up action. You're equipped with all the Brucester's famous Jeet Kune Do moves, and you get to go ballistic with nunchukas too!

The fighting system feels very fluid and sees you thumping the crap out of gangs of lowlifes while fending off other attackers, in combat much like that of EA's upcoming Buffy game. Some of the scenarios also see you employing stealth tactics to take out the enemy, MGS-style. Bring it on, Brucie!

CVG RECKONS

Hiding around corners and twatting people with nunchukas: very cool! It's still early, so let's hope the finished game does justice to the legend. Mike



MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX 2

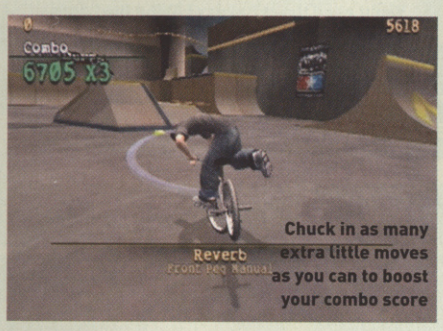
FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **JUNE 2** DEVELOPER: **RAINBOW STUDIOS** PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**

Think 'road trip' and you're likely to picture a whale-like momma ravaging a skinny gimp, and Tom Green filling his gob with a poor defenceless rodent. Luckily there are no such antics afoot in Mat Hoffman's road trip in Pro BMX 2, which offers the kind of extreme experience that gives you goose bumps, not herpes.

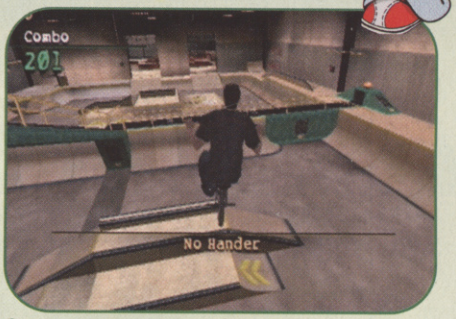
The main game mode is set around Mat and co. travelling across America, going loco by tricking every single inch of ground available. It's rammed to the gills with edges, ramps and obstacles to trick off, while the most important additions come in the form of the awesome flatland stunts and trick-morphing capabilities of the riders. You'll get a massive buzz when you string together a load of freeform ground stunts, and the trick-morphing element means that there are almost limitless possibilities for trick combinations.

Like Pro Skater 3 there are cool objectives to complete on each stage, but Pro BMX 2 takes this a step further – complete one set of challenges on a level and you'll unlock a whole new set. Watch out for CVG's full review next month.

When you're pulling a lip trick, chuck in extra moves, like a handlebar spin

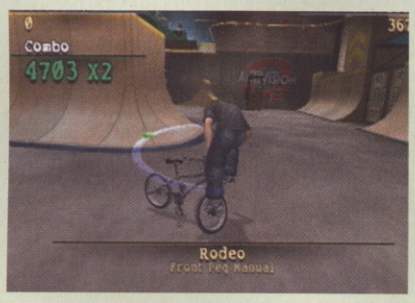


Chuck in as many extra little moves as you can to boost your combo score



It's not all ground work. You can still catch mad air

Flip the bike around but keep an eye on your balance meter or you'll eat concrete



Los Angeles is just one of the stops on your road trip across the US

CVG RECKONS

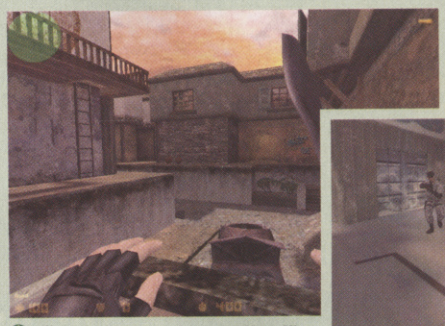
The flatland freestyle tricks take the Hoffman gameplay to new heights; it's time to get pumped with excitement. Mike

COUNTER-STRIKE: CONDITION ZERO

FORMAT: **PC** OUT: **APRIL** DEVELOPER: **GEARBOX** PUBLISHER: **VU GAMES**

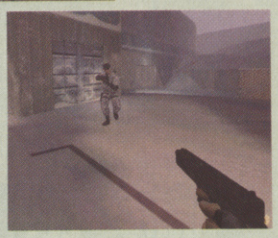
It's almost here! Yes, the release of the single-player version of the world's favourite online team-based, first person shooter Counter-Strike, is imminent. Before we had no choice but to log on and get killed by some smug geek with a better Internet connection than us, but from next month we'll be able do away with our modems and take on a bunch of bots instead.

Developer Gearbox has been coding away on a collection of new maps and life-like bots, which will learn from their past mistakes.



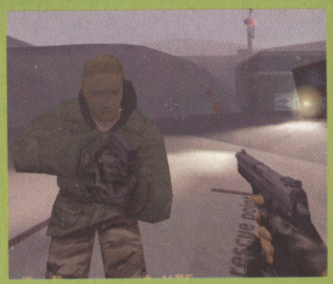
Models are now fitted with the best skin for the level

"Come on, I'll take you all on!"

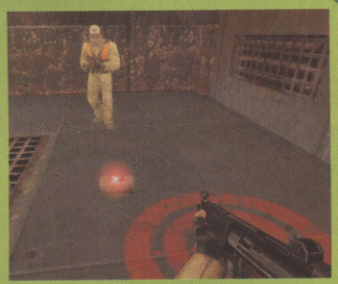


KEEP IT IN THE FAMILY

If you're worried you won't be able to join CZ servers while running standard Counter-Strike, fear not. Gearbox has promised a patch which will make Counter-Strike 100 per cent compatible with CZ servers. It's going to be pretty hard for you to tell who's a bot and who's not.



While running a Condition Zero server, some of your team mates may well be running a patched version of standard Counter-Strike



As well as all of the old mission goals, like defusing a bomb, Condition Zero will feature several new ones, including team evac

V-RALLY 3

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **JUNE** DEVELOPER: **EDEN STUDIOS** PUBLISHER: **INFOGRAMES**

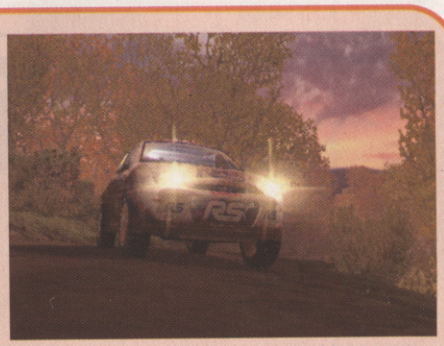
It's been a long time coming, but PlayStation 2 racing fans will at last be able to experience the joy of muddy flaps on their treasured console. The move from PSone to PS2 has allowed for an unprecedented level of car and track detail, as beautifully modelled vehicles thrash across some 24 courses (48 if you include mirrored tracks), set in locations as diverse as Finland and Kenya. But sadly not Wales.

The focus is on simulation here, so don't expect the forgiving handling of something like Sega Rally – turn too sharply and you'll be spinning like Torvill and Dean on a merry-go-round before you know it. The major addition is the V-Rally Mode itself, which offers role-playing elements similar to those planned for TOCA Race Driver.

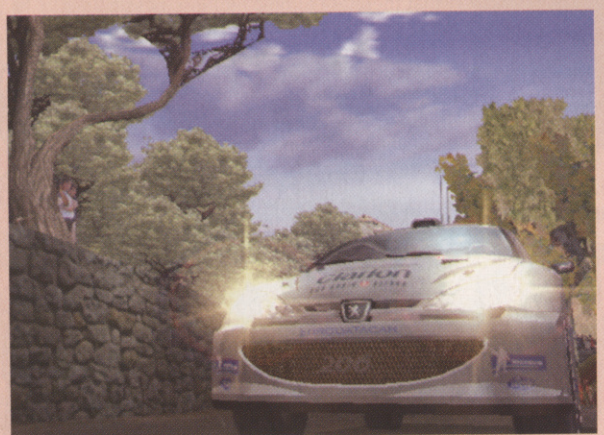
The game sees you become part of a team, liaising with mechanics and managers and competing against your rivals. Oh, and you might like to try winning, too.

With GameCube and Xbox versions lurking in the shadows, waiting for the green light from Infogrames, V-Rally 3 could be about to become a major next gen player. Better watch out, McRae.

You'll need the reflexes of Ali on the bends



Lighting is used to great effect in night stages



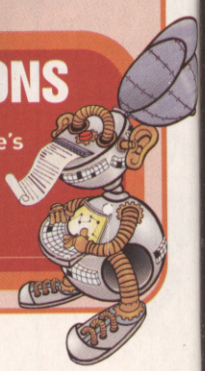
What a beautiful day for driving... like a maniac

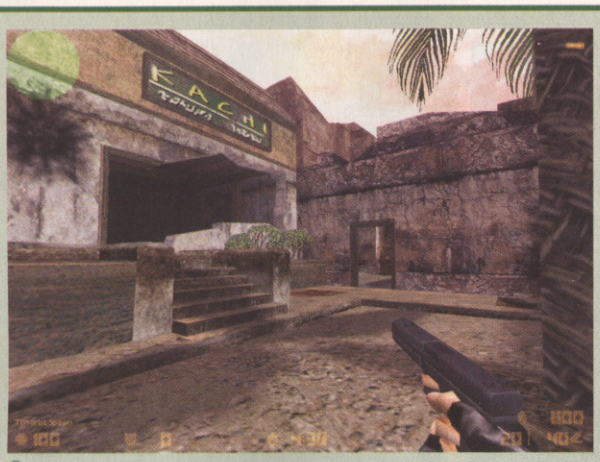
Appreciate the scale in replay

"I can't see a bloody thing!"

CVG RECKONS

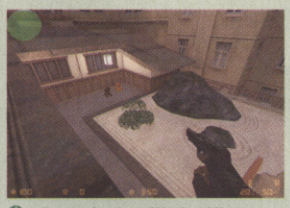
Disappointingly, there's no multiplayer, but the handling is sharp and the detail fantastic. Johnny





CZ's online HUD will be the same as that of standard Counter-Strike

The greatest online shooter?



Rescuing's still significant

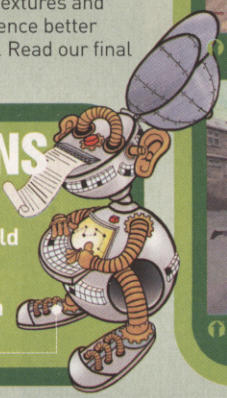
ALL CHANGE

You'll play as the leader of a group of special forces soldiers, all with individual and upgradeable skills, who you will lead against terrorist factions from different areas of the world, including the Middle East and Russia. Both your team mates and enemies will carry individual files, which will store their past mistakes and successes and influence their tactics. This feature should rid the game of predictability and monotony, and will have you thinking about your every move in order to preserve your team.

However, the inclusion of bots isn't the only change that we can expect. A host of new weapons have been introduced, including devastating LAW rockets, Molotov Cocktails for terrorists, and impenetrable riot shields for counter-terrorists (the downside of these being that you can only carry a pistol). The Half-Life engine has also received a major overhaul, with the addition of tons of new textures and effects making the whole experience better looking and far more immersive. Read our final verdict in our review next issue.

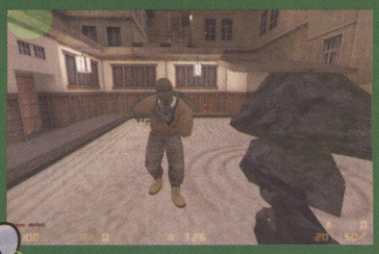
CVG RECKONS

Looks like the greatest online shooter ever could become one of the best single-players too. And it's going to be more fun than ever. **Martin**

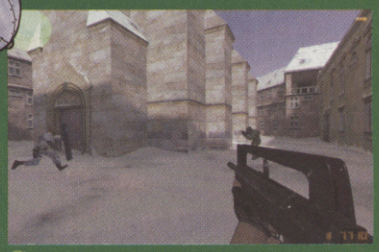


WHAT ELSE IS UP THEIR SLEEVES?

Gearbox was adamant that Condition Zero should retain many of the principals of Counter-Strike, and it has hinted that it's saving the major overhauls for the next instalment. Regional damage and a whole new engine are just two of the changes to look forward to.



Expect zonal injuries in Counter-Strike 2



There will also be plenty more weapons

Coming March 2002

SHREK™

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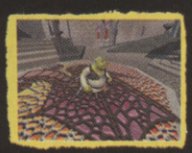
The first Xbox™ title based on a CGI [Computer Generated Images] movie license, *Shrek* is a stunning example of the graphics power of the Xbox video games system. The gameplay will include all of the humour, wit, and action of *Shrek*, his friends and 3 exclusively new designed characters in 8 never-before-seen worlds.

"Who'd have thought that a green ogre would be the character to give videogame fans a real reason to be excited about Xbox? ...the brightly coloured 3D platform world of *Shrek*'s game was a hit at European show ECTS..."
Computer & Video Games, 10-2001



Game Features:
- Master 4 missions in each world and unlock the race mode
- Find out different theme worlds with ludicrous inhabitants and *Shrek*' s edgy and sarcastic humour!
- Try out the classic *Shrek* moves such as punch, fart, stomp, kick, throw and (fire-) burp!

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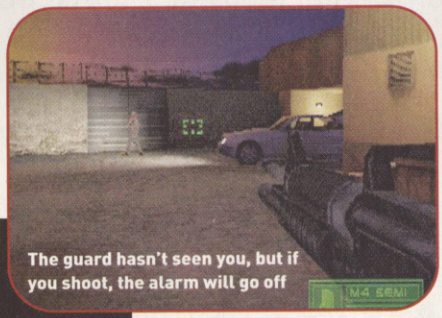
The Best Of The Rest

After years in a development jail, look what's up for parole...

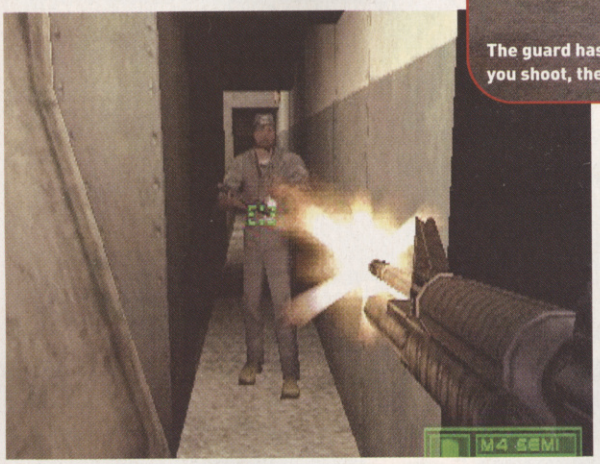
DELTA FORCE URBAN WARFARE

FORMAT: **PSONE** OUT: **JUNE** DEVELOPER: **REBELLION** PUBLISHER: **NOVALOGIC**

In this day and age, you can't argue that a game based on America's number one anti-terrorist mob isn't topical. But what does seem weird about the timing of this release is that it's for the geriatric PSone. Whatever, those still clinging to their last gen machines will be chuffed that the fight against terror is no longer limited to PC and PS2.



Some nice-looking weather effects are being built in to make things really interesting



But if they do see you, you have no choice, do you?

Night vision levels are looking really tense

What you get for your bucks are 12 missions-worth of full-scale shootouts and creeping around urban locations, during which you have to try to prevent those damn terrorists from building a nuclear device.

Being the well-funded super-psychopath that you are, you'll have a whole bunch of highly destructive weapons to play with, as well as night vision and all the gadgets you need to make good prime-time Sky News footage. Tasty. Okay, so the PSone may not be the most fashionable piece of kit to have under your TV nowadays, but it isn't dead just yet. Not unlike a certain Mr O. Bin Laden.

DOWNFORCE

PS2 **JUNE** VIRGIN

Sod Formula 1 with all its namby-pamby rules. This is the future of motor racing, where speed and carnage matter more than realism and accuracy. You'll get seven racing modes, all with two things in common – high speed and huge crashes.

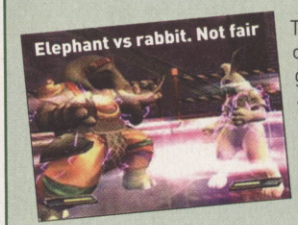
MADDEN NFL 2002

GC **TBC** ELECTRONIC ARTS

Fat-man Madden's debut on GameCube should feature all the up-to-date teams and players, as well as extra support for widescreen TVs, allowing you to see more of the pitch. Expect better-looking players and loads of hidden treats with all-new Madden cards.

BLOODY ROAR PRIMAL FURY

GC **MAY** ACTIVISION



The first full-on fighting game to appear on GameCube in the UK, Bloody Roar features 16 characters, each with the ability to change into animals – like our elephant friend here – slugging it out. Well, it'll provide an alternative to Luigi's Mansion.

WORLD WAR II

PC **AUTUMN** CODEMASTERS

An RTS based on some minor fracas that apparently happened in the '40s. Only instead of just piling in units to fight, morale, courage and fear play a part. Your troops react to situations and fight (or run away!) accordingly. An RTS Medal Of Honor? We hope so.

METROID PRIME

GC **TBC** NINTENDO

Here's another of the main reasons to get very excited about GameCube. Blast-from-the-past Metroid comes back with a first-person makeover and a disc full of intense in-your-face blasting action. Developer Retro Studios is working closely with the maestro Miyamoto to keep the game true to its auspicious roots. Classic elements should include suits that can survive extreme atmospheric conditions and imbue heroine Samus Aran with superhuman powers. And let's not forget a pile of ingenious weapons and gadgets. This will be HUGE.

Environment suits...

...nifty weaponry...

...stunning locations...

...must be Metroid

NEED FOR SPEED: HOT PURSUIT 2

PS2 **JUNE** ELECTRONIC ARTS

The bad boy of racing games is back. Forget the law, just hack it through each level as fast as you can. The quicker you go, the more chance you get of unlocking more of the game's secrets.

There's gonna be more than 20 exotic cars from the likes of Ferrari, Porsche and Lamborghini, which you'll get to race at ridiculous speeds. Doing this will no doubt bring the cops down on you like a pack of dogs, but you'll be able to recognise individual policemen and their racing styles and work out how to out-drive them.

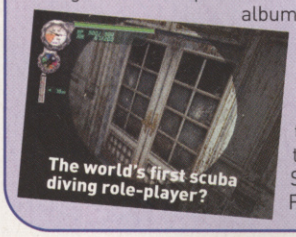
If all that wasn't enough, you'll also have to cane it through extreme weather conditions, such as hurricanes and snow storms. Bring it on!

To win, learn other drivers' racing styles

EVERBLUE

PS2 **AUTUMN** CAPCOM

Don your finest scuba gear, take a deep breath and explore the depths of the ocean in this diving role-player. Dig around to discover treasure to sell when you get back to dry land. Includes a Free Swim mode that lets you explore anywhere in the game, taking underwater pictures to store in your album. What's surprising is that this is the next big project from the creator of the original Street Fighter.



RED CARD SOCCER

PS2 **MAY** MIDWAY

Footie the way some would love to see it played, and the way Leeds often do play it – fast, furious and packed with fouls. You know how to play football so we won't go on about that bit, but what does need explaining is the power-up system, which does stuff like give you speed boosts and added bite in challenges. Add a less than eagle-eyed ref and you can begin to imagine the carnage.

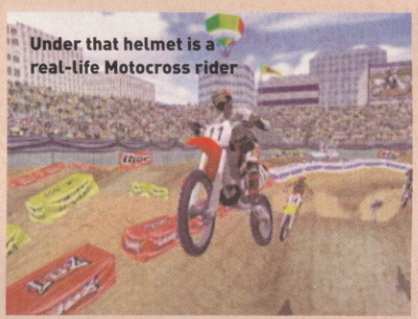
MX2002 FEATURING RICKY CARMICHAEL

XBOX **TBC** THQ

Motocross's number one stunt rider is back. His latest game features 28 big-name Motocross riders, 25 real-life tracks and a list of stunts as long as your arm. Longer if you're a short-arse.

There will be expanded career modes for you to replicate all the thrills of life as a stunt rider, together with a set of new mini-games to keep you interested.

And if that isn't enough, you can have a go at knocking up your own stunt tracks and riders. Be warned: attempts to replicate the antics of Mr Carmichael will most likely lead to serious crushing of gonads.



The camera pulls out when four players get involved in a ruck

BARBARIANS

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **JUNE** DEVELOPER: **SAFFIRE** PUBLISHER: **VIRGIN**

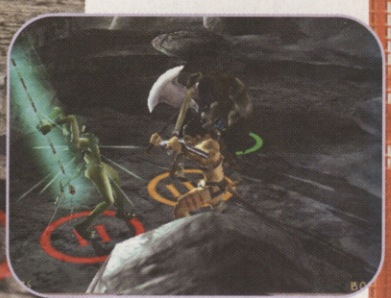
With its huge, interactive arenas, its dynamic camera and its four-player beat 'em up gameplay, Barbarians looks for all the world like Dreamcast's Powerstone dressed up in chainmail.

Up to four human and four computer-controlled players can join the ruckus, with the choice of everything from luscious lady warriors to huge hairy ogre-things to play as. But it'll be the one who uses the arena to his advantage that will triumph. Weapons, magical power-ups and innocent-looking pillars and stone objects can all be used to slash, bash and mash the living daylights out of each other. Subtle it ain't.

Walls can be broken through to reveal hidden areas, where you'll find yet more weapons lying around to use. Brutal? You betcha.

"Die, weakling. Suffer death at the hands of the Snot Of Doom." The magical attacks look interesting

If that bra strap goes, the whiplash will end this fight right now



Good strategy – let those two slug it out and take down the winner

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Virtua Fighter 4-ever

Don't start what you can't finish. CVG traces what could be the beginning of the end for Tekken on PS2

GAME: VIRTUA FIGHTER 4 **FORMAT:** PS2 **RELEASE DATE:** 10 MAY
BY: SEGA-AM2 **PUBLISHER:** SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT EUROPE

When Virtua Fighter 4 makes its European PS2 debut on May 10, it'll disturb the status quo. We've all grown up respecting Tekken as the only 3D fighter on PlayStation worth batting an eyelid over, but it's never faced this kind of competition before. "Virtua Fighter? Yeah, it's big in Japan. CVG likes it, but I think it's rubbish. And you need a Sega console to play it," say the sceptics. So, have we been wrong? CVG headed for London's arcades to talk to four international fighter tournament regulars to find out who's now on top in the never-ending rumble between the series and to assess VF4's chances on PS2.

Lei-Fei prays for the future of VF

ROUND ONE TO VIRTUA FIGHTER

Sega pioneered the first 3D fighting game, Virtua Fighter, released in 1993. Before then nobody had dreamed of such a concept. Mo Imran Ramzan remembers: "The first time you ever saw it, it was, like, 'Wow!'. As an attempt to make a 3D game, Sega had done its homework and set in place a mechanic that made it unique among fighting games."

ENTER THE TEKKEN

Then Namco released Tekken to coincide with the launch of PlayStation in late 1994. Sega had only just launched its ill-fated Saturn console, with a near-perfect version of VF. But PSone soon emerged as the general public's favourite, and with that Tekken (and the concept of 3D fighting in general) was introduced to a huge new audience.

The original Virtua Fighter helped kick-start the 3D revolution

TEAM CVG

These guys' knowledge of fighting games is unsurpassed. If anyone has anything worth saying about Virtua Fighter, it's them!

NAME: Anthony Anifowoshe, 20
GAMES: Tekken 3, Street Fighter Alpha 3, 19XX, Virtua Fighter 4, Radiant Silvergun

NAME: Rehan Shawrani, 21
GAMES: Super Street Fighter II Turbo, Tekken 3, Tekken Tag Tournament

NAME: Dominic O' Conner, 20
GAMES: Super Street Fighter II Turbo, Tekken 3

NAME: Mo Imran Ramzan, 25
GAMES: Metroid, Zelda, Street Fighter, Virtua Fighter

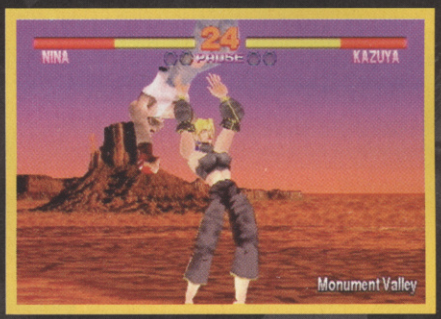
1994: TEKKEN

Secret boss characters made Tekken cool

The Devil versus Angel in Tekken 2

1995: TEKKEN 2

Many T2 characters shared the same moves



Throw moves were more complex in Tekken

The appeal of Tekken, then as now, was significantly different to that of Virtua Fighter. It was much flashier, for a start, with great lighting effects to exaggerate the overstated moves. Tekken's four-button alternative to VF's three-button set-up also made sense to newcomers. Plus Namco cleverly added a cool back-story to the proceedings, conveyed spectacularly in short movies on PlayStation. One of the characters even resembled Bruce Lee!

This showbiz element helped Tekken appeal to Western gamers in the same way that Mortal Kombat stole the thunder from Street Fighter. But it wasn't over yet. As Mo says, "Tekken started to appeal to Western gamers but the Japanese are more critical of their games. VF2 really started the craze in Japan when people discovered how in-depth the game was."

MILESTONES AND MILLSTONES

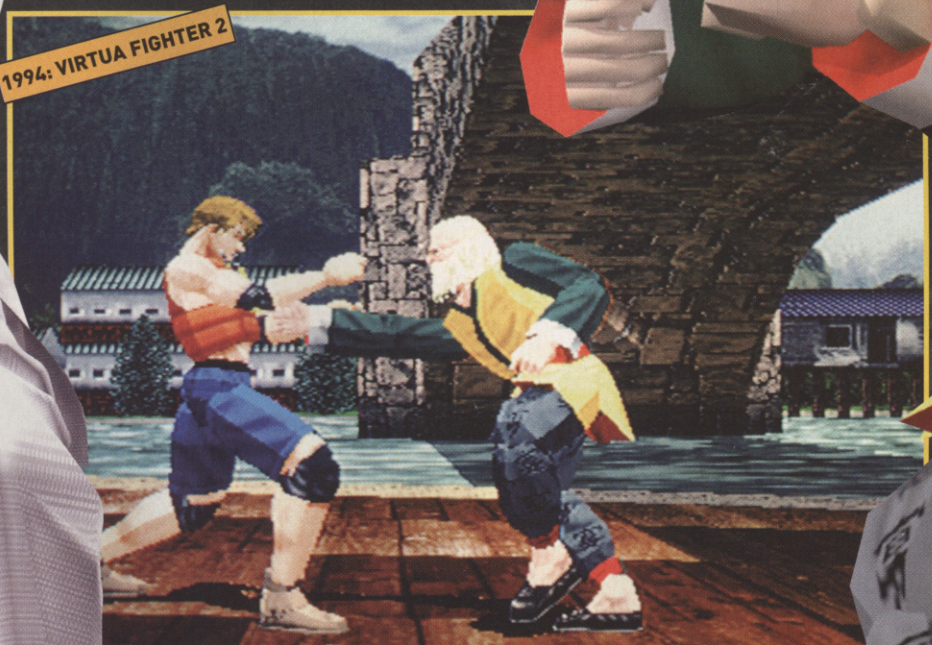
Indeed, when Sega unleashed VF2 in the arcades in November '94, it instantly antiquated both Namco's and Sega's first efforts. "VF was a great technical debut for the series, but there weren't that many moves. Generally, people thought it didn't have so much depth," Mo recalls. In contrast, VF2 set out to define the trend that has continued until today – no matter that Tekken was selling out on PlayStation, in the arcades the credibility was all Sega's.

Mo continues: "In Virtua Fighter 2, Sega really had thought about it. It introduced combos, moves that staggered you – stuff you couldn't do in Street Fighter. It became a lot more realistic."

Again, Sega had delivered a milestone game, causing the momentum to gather pace in favour of VF. But this was only in Japan. In the UK, USA and later Korea, the Tekken fan-base had exploded.

Namco launched Tekken 2 in 1995, detonating with lightning-fused attitude, leaving players snow-blind to the comparatively classic, noble styling of VF2. The home version of Tekken 2 was a genre-defining moment: arcade and PlayStation combined to forge an international legend.

1994: VIRTUA FIGHTER 2



Shun Di's drunken style and Lion's characteristic Mantis technique were amazing

WHAT DOESN'T KILL YOU...

But the gloves really came off in 1996, when VF 3 brought game industry exhibitions to a standstill. Visually, the series had transcended to godlike status, plus we had a heavenly new game system on our hands. Introducing dodging allowed players to sidestep, in addition to moving forwards and back. This was the first time attacks could be initiated from an opponent's left or right side. From here, use of movement became another essential part of VF strategy. Also, the 3D arenas were undulated to force tactical play even further. The competition, however, wasn't exactly sleeping.

Namco's Tekken series, though powered by less powerful technology, stepped into its own in '97. Tekken 3 was a much more focused game than Tekken 2. Newcomers Jin Kazama, Hwoarang and Ling Xiaoyu made up for the lack of graphical prowess with some of the greatest routines yet seen. At this time, even our VF aficionado Mo found respect. "The key thing was the animation. It was amazing, and the moves were so elaborate. Tekken 3 improved on throws so that your arms would reach out if you missed. It also added moves so that if you hit someone at the right time they'd keel over. Which proves that there are a couple of elements that VF has since borrowed too."

1997: TEKKEN 3

Tekken 3 characters all boasted cool animation

Anthony 'Ant' Anifowoshe, whose previous favourites were fast-paced 2D fighters, found a lot to admire in Tekken 3: "It is more a reactionary thing, with string-based attacks that you can counter while they're happening. When you see two really good players fighting it's less like a game and more like a dance. You see continual movement. For me that's what makes a really good game."

Tekken could now withstand many proud VF players' criticisms. It was getting harder to convince anyone that VF had something special that Tekken lacked. Rehan Shawrani thought this was unfair. "VF players had too many preconceptions of Tekken players – like it didn't require too much strategy, and a beginner could get on there and have a good chance of beating expert players. This wasn't true."

From autumn 1996 until summer 2001, Virtua Fighter 3 enjoyed a reputation as the most respected 3D fighter in Japan. But the US, Europe and Korea continued their love affair with Tekken 3. Dreamcast did nothing to help with a lacklustre home version of VF3tb (Tag Battle) in November '98. Only a small group of fans such as Mo were willing to appreciate its finer details. "VF has always been the cult. Tekken has always been the blockbuster. VF is the thinking man's beat 'em up."

In addition to looking superb, the 3D arenas in VF3 had undulating surfaces for extra challenge

1996: VIRTUA FIGHTER 3

YOUR NEW FAVOURITE GAME

Since August last year, the global Virtua Fighter scene has swollen enormously, while the

VF3 pioneered the use of dodging around the opponent

Wolf isn't the only bruiser in the VF series now – newcomer Vanessa can mix it with the worst of 'em

Freaky stances are usually easy to trigger. The skill is learning the new moves and combo strings that are possible from these poses

Kicking them when they're down is a fine way to show who's boss. Stay down, Kage

Tekken scene has started to shrivel. The new Virtua Fighter is tailored to meet the demands of its most hardcore fans, while offering newcomers more entry points to enjoy it. It was five years in the making. Meanwhile Tekken 4, that took just 10 months to produce, has perhaps been less considered.

Much of the backlash against Tekken has been blamed on a complete change of system, says Mo. "With Tekken 4, Namco made a big mistake because it changed the system so much that fans of Tekken 2 and Tekken 3 hate it. And it's not as flash as before, so the casual players don't like it either. Namco has alienated its user base."

But the biggest development CVG can see is Sega's VF.net system. VF4 players store their chosen fighter on something similar to a phone card, and insert this into a machine each time they play. You can modify the look of your arcade character from a PC at home, or even using your mobile! And as your rival sits down to play VF4 in the arcade, you'll get a text message when he slots in his card to play. The PS2 game's Kumite mode even adapts this by using memory cards. Again, VF.net is a Japan-only thing and so it will have less influence on players over here. But there's no getting away from the fact it is a stroke of genius.

"If anything, VF.net is the one advantage that Virtua Fighter, in the arcade, does have over Tekken," Ant says with certainty. "VF.net has been successful because it's not really about the actual game. The cult of people around the VF scene is inspiring more people to come to it. A lot of a game's success can hinge on the community around it. I think VF.net amplifies the scene around VF4. That system alone takes your legendary status and multiplies it by 10, because you have a tangible, technical, sophisticated way of connecting and ranking players. Without that system, the games are equal, but in Japan they're unequal because Sega is helping build their scene."

Perhaps if Sega could arrange VF.net in Europe that would be the knockout blow. But it seems evident that for our 3D beat 'em up grand masters, the eight-year-old fight between the fighter series remains inconclusive. So what did our experts think of VF4's chances specifically on PS2?

The VF.net cards are the size of a phonecard and store one character

Win or lose, it's registered on VF.net

Lau and Pai Chan are still the most graceful fighters

ANT:
"I think Virtua Fighter 4 will do better on PlayStation 2 than Tekken 4. The only thing the Virtua Fighter series really lacked was marketing. That was because it was on a Sega console. Now Sony is behind it, they'll push it in the right way. It has to do well."

MO:
"If Tekken 4 sells more than Virtua Fighter 4 in Japan I'll eat my hat.* But over here I don't think Virtua Fighter 4 will be that big. It will sell well, especially with Sony behind it, but Tekken 4 is still going to be a more accessible game and much flashier. There aren't any characters in Virtua Fighter 4 that look as cool as Jin. They look nice but they're not amazing."
*Mo was not wearing a hat...

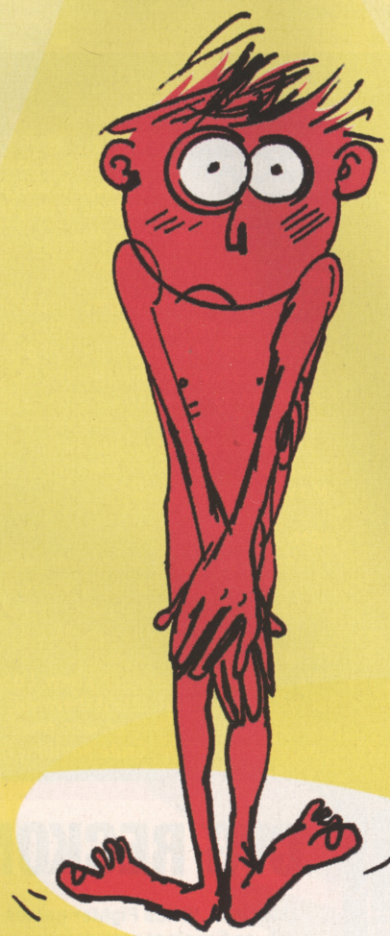
DOM:
"There will always be people who will only play in the arcade, because that's where the real competition is. It's not about sitting at home."

REHAN:
"VF4 and Tekken 4 are fairly new. I don't think people know enough about them yet, so we'll see. They changed Tekken 4 so much because they wanted to incorporate so many new ideas."

CVG RECKONS

Until now, Virtua Fighter games had it tough, as Sega's consoles weren't popular. But as VF4 is coming out on PS2, Tekken 4 can wave that advantage goodbye. And because they both look 100% like their coin-op cousins, the quality of conversion from the arcade to home is no longer an issue either. So for the first time the two will be judged solely on their mechanics. So, as Rehan says, "We'll see..." Paul

And you thought your Sex life was private.



Do you really want your sex life to be a spectator sport?

In the red corner: your mates and hers, winding you up. In the blue corner: your parents and hers, threatening surgery.

And in the middle: you. With enough pressure in your pants to run a power station. And enough on your back to crush a bus.

With all this going on, is it any wonder so many of us rush into sex and screw it up?

So relax. Do it when you decide you're ready – not someone else. And don't take too much notice of what your mates SAY they do.

Most girls don't have full sex until they're at least seventeen (many wait a lot longer). And the average gap between a first kiss and full intercourse isn't ten seconds – it's actually several years (some snogging session).

So take your time. You'll enjoy it more. She'll enjoy it more.

And, when that happens, you'll both find it a whole lot easier to forget about everyone else.

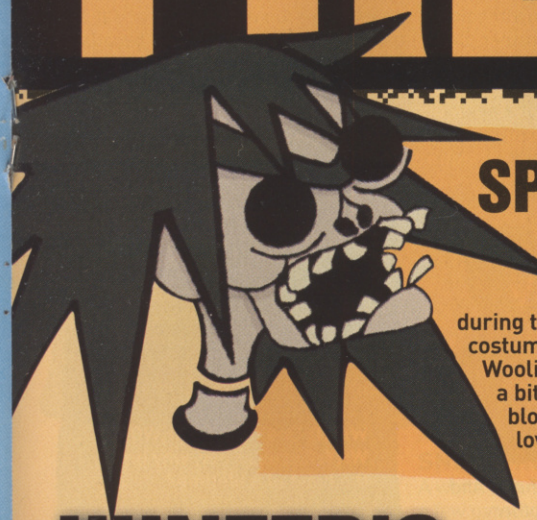
sex

Are you thinking about it enough?

If you're under 18 and need advice about sex or contraception, phone Sexwise on 0800 28 29 30 or visit us at www.ruthinking.co.uk The call is free and confidential.

Textphone (for people with hearing impairments) 0800 328 1651.

FREEPLAY



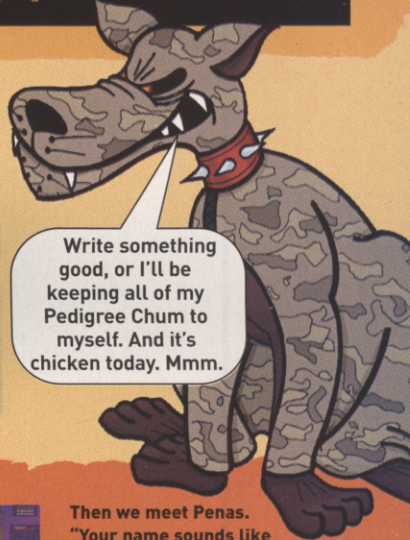
SPILL YOUR GUTS, LOSE YOUR MIND

So you've probably completed MGS2 ten times by now, collected all the dog tags and been running around your 'hood during the cutscenes dressed in a makeshift Raiden costume with a plastic samurai sword you bought in Woolies. But what other games have made you go a bit bonkers recently? What's making your blood boil, and what's making you smile like a love-struck puppy? Hunter's all ears!

Do you fancy having fifteen minutes of fame in CVG's Freeplay? Then wing your high scores, challenges and opinions to us now! Write to us at: Freeplay, CVG, Dennis Publishing, 30 Cleveland Street, London W1T 4JD. Or email us at: mailbag.cvg@dennis.co.uk

HUNTER'S MAILBAG

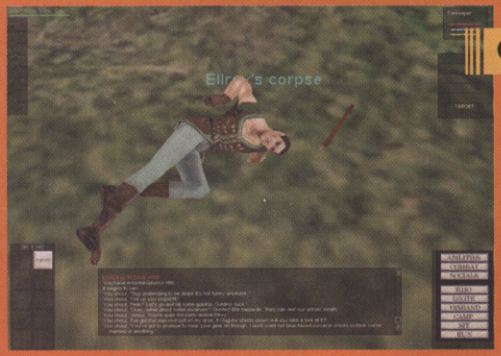
Don't keep your opinions to yourselves. Write to us, then your friends can laugh at you!



EVERQUEST TOMFOOLERY

Seeing as how many thousands of people log on to play first-person role-player snoozathon Everquest every day, me and my mates decided to have a bit of fun in there. We took shots while we were at it. So whaddaya reckon, CVG?
Andrew Wetherfield

CVG: *Irresponsible but mildly amusing behaviour all the same, Andrew. Well done.*



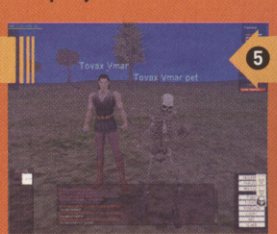
First we set up a giant ogre warrior and wander off into the 'mysterious' Neriak Commons. It's dark and empty and there's nobody around. We find a dead body and shout at it, but a tiny lizard kicks us to death before we can see if anyone comes to talk to us. Oh.

Then we make a horny female character and go to Qeynos Hills. Jackpot. "Greetings m'lady," says a knight called Salatheil. "Why do you talk like a twat? Can we join your party?"

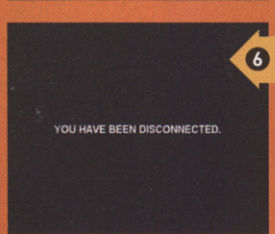
Apparently we can, and over the course of the next seven minutes we type, "Are we nearly there yet?", 40 times into the chat window on the way to some rubbish tower. The party is disbanded.

Then we meet Penas. "Your name sounds like 'Penis'. Are you a penis?" "No, I'm a new character." "So what the hell are you then?" "I'm a druid."

We announce we have Tourette's Syndrome and start swearing lots. The Everquest police arrives. "That's against the code." "It's against common sense to play this boring game." "Stop it or you're out."



We try to run away, but they use magic to drag us back. We promise to be good. Then a man walks past with a pet skeleton. Using swear words, we tell him this is frankly a ridiculous state of affairs.

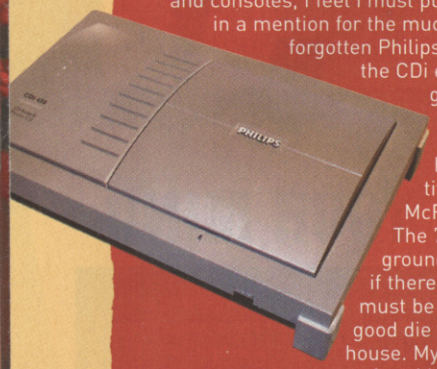


The sad little man and his equally pathetic pet are halfway through kicking our collective arse when YOU HAVE BEEN DISCONNECTED appears on a black screen. That appears to be that. Ah.

GOLDEN BONE

AH, THE MEMORIES

After reading no end of articles about 'retro' games and consoles, I feel I must put in a mention for the much forgotten Philips CDi. The fact is that the CDi ended up in an early grave due to poor software back-up and extortionate UK prices. However, some CDi titles, such as Mad Dog McRee, Burn Cycle and The 7th Guest, were groundbreaking. I guess that if there is a moral to my tale it must be that 'sometimes the good die young'. But not in my house. My CDi is sitting comfortably under my telly and it's not going anywhere for a long time. (Well, it does have a PS2 resting on top of it.)



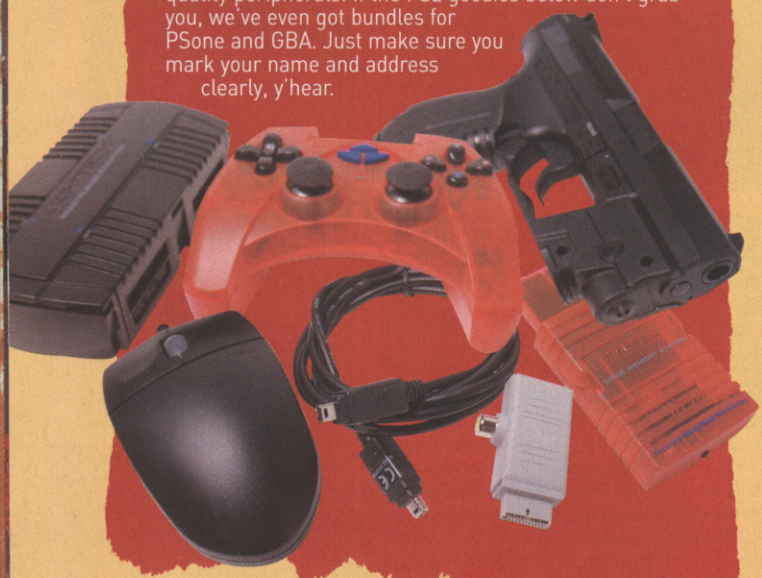
Tim Hope (whose address we need)

Tim, you've brought hope to us all. In fact, without your letter this page would be hopeless – there'd be literally no hope at all. So now in return, and for reminding us about the wonderful CDi, not only are we going to reward you with a picture of the said masterpiece, but as soon as you send your address to us, we're going to post you a Joytech goodie bag. Good grief, we're generous.

Burn Cycle: Phillips CDi's finest

JOYTECH®

On the telly, what do points mean? PRIZES! And now they do in CVG too. Your pearls of wisdom can blag you a load of free gear. We've teamed up with those purveyors of fine add-ons at JOYTECH to offer each month's Golden Bone letter writer a free bundle of quality peripherals. If the PS2 goodies below don't grab you, we've even got bundles for PSone and GBA. Just make sure you mark your name and address clearly, y'hear.



DID WE SPOIL MGS2?

Why is CVG hell-bent on spoiling Metal Gear Solid 2 for us European gamers? In the last few issues it seems that all CVG wants to do is expose every single bit of detail and any surprises that the game has to offer. I never thought I would see the day when CVG would stoop so low as to spoil a game for people waiting for it, just to push sales of the magazine. I don't want to read every single plot detail of the game, and I can't imagine why anyone would. I would rather play the game and find out for myself. I am sure that is what Hideo Kojima intended. Covering info about a new game is all well and good, but you lot seem to have missed the point.

Zaheer Omar

CVG: *We're hearing you, Zaheer. And now we want to hear from other readers. Did we get over-excited with our exclusive screenshots and info? Or was our coverage just right?*

CHART

CVG

The stuff that's turning us on

1	**Tekki (Xbox)**	Alex: Mega mech game with the world's biggest controller
2	**Golden Sun (GBA)**	Lee: A doorway to RPG heaven in the palm of your hand
3	**Metal Gear Solid 2 (PS2)**	Les: Finished it, but keep coming back for more
4	**Medal Of Honor: Frontline (PS2)**	Pete: Closest thing to real war on a console? Hopefully
5	**Advance Wars (GBA)**	Mike: Can't stop playing! Over 150 hours racked up!

PLAYSTATION WHINGER

First off, I would like to say I don't care if you answer with childish comments as I think you have been greatly criticised about them and I don't think it makes much difference. My letter is about Sony vs. Nintendo. First, I am fed up with the usual PlayStation owner insults: "Ooh, our console sells better than yours, which means it's better." Completely false. By that measure, are they saying that Harry Potter is the best film of all time?

I also don't think it deserves to be the better-selling console. Most British PlayStation owners only buy PSone and PS2s to 'go with the flow', because other people say it's good. Nintendo makes brilliant games but PlayStation owners won't accept they're good because they're a bit childish. Don't get me wrong, I don't hate PlayStation completely – without it gaming might not be as cool, but this letter is here to say there are no more excuses to make fun of the Nintendo expert or novice.

James

CVG: *Okay James. But CVG would never make fun of Nintendo or say the games are childish – mainly because Nintendo is brilliant and (usually) makes brilliant games. Can we have some free GameCubes, please?*

CENSORED!

The letters we DIDN'T print

WHAT: One from Dick W. Otter
WHY: Because it began: "Games, games, games, it's all you candyasses ever talk about," and face it, if you were us, would you have printed it?

WHAT: One from DaRKWOLF
WHY: Because hey, why break the habit of a lifetime?

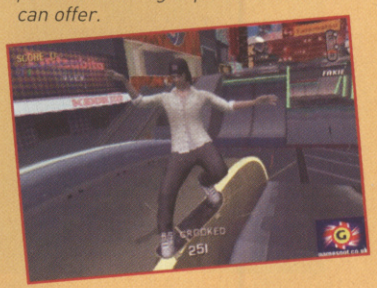
WHAT: One from 'the dude'
WHY: Because his handwriting made him look more like 'the idiot'.

CVG IN THE DOCK (SERIOUS ANSWER)

I thought the abuse you got in issue 244 was a little harsh, but as I read through the mag I decided your Metal Gear Solid 2 review was totally insane. For months you've said it's the best game on PS2 and maybe ever, and then you go and give it nine. Tony Hawk's, which got 10, was totally ace, but according to you, MGS2 is better – but you gave it nine! I hope you print this, as I bet there are other people who feel the same way.

Paul

CVG: *Okay, Paul, untwist your knickers, here's how it goes. MGS2 is a daddy of a game, it rocks, and that's why it got a nine. It didn't get a perfect 10 because it's slightly too similar to the original, too short and there's simply too much plot. TH3 is a different genre, you must compare like with like. It's also just about as perfect a skating experience as life can offer.*



CVG IN THE DOCK (RUDE ANSWER)

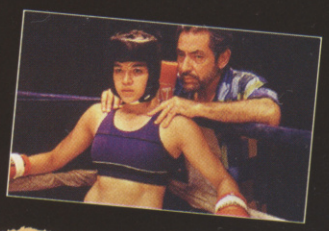
I read your magazine and I used to see you guys seriously as the godfathers of games. I used to trust you. So let's get to it. You gave MGS2 a

CVG STINKERS

CAN'T PLEASE ALL THE PEOPLE...

I'm writing about your inflatable cover gifts from issue 244. I quote: "You've probably only stopped jabbing at Jin's nose because your arms ache." Not in my case! After nearly hyperventilating blowing the damn thing up, then recapturing my composure to take my first swipe, I found like most men, he has trouble staying up. I was under the impression the point of these playthings is they rise again and again so we can enjoy the release of pent-up aggression! Needless to say, it had the opposite effect as even the tiniest hint of a finger flick left it lying horizontal. It's not even as if he's that good-looking you want him endlessly on his back! My fighter has now become a toy for the dog! I wonder how long it will take her to burst it?
Suzii

CVG: *Can any other readers match Suzii for sheer ingratitude? Perhaps your PS2 Survival Kit didn't actually help you survive anything? Or maybe you would have preferred your Worms! carry-bag in a nice turquoise colour with go-faster stripes, eh, Suzii? Eh?*



9/10 but Tony Hawk's 3 a 10/10, that is what disappoints me. Just so I can still respect your words, tell me one thing: is THPS3 better than MGS2? I know this thought is on a lot of readers' minds, so please answer it. Oh, by the way, you can call me a moaning git and tell me to shut up if you want.
Richard Thomson

CVG: *You're a moaning git. Shut up.*

SHORT STUFF

Do Buffy's House and Sunnydale Mall feature in the Buffy Xbox game? I know that there are other famous Buffy places such as the Bronze and the School but it was bugging me whether they were in it or not.
Oliver Langley, Buffy Fan

CVG: *We've seen no sign of Sunnydale Mall, but the house is sure to be in there...*

Do you know whether you will need to buy a memory card for GameCube, or will it have hard drive memory like the Xbox? Thanx for the great magazine.
Johnny

CVG: *Sorry, but you'll need a memory card.*

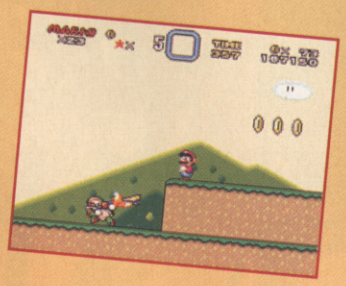
The new-look CVG is better with the huge reviews and previews, witty comments to letters and amusing thoughts. Don't listen to Adrian, DJM or Mart from ish 244. If they don't like it, they should buy a different mag.
Phil Brooks

CVG: *No they shouldn't.*

SNES WHO?

A while ago, I was given a SNES and a few games with it so I decided to look up reviews on your website. When I try I can't seem to find any! Why? Another thing is that quite a lot of games seem to be so short. I recently bought one of the Harry Potter games (GBC) because you gave it an eight and it looked Okay. I played and enjoyed myself but completed it in the equivalent of a day! Then I picked up a copy of Kuru Kuru Kururin (GBA) and completed it in two days! But I've been playing Super Mario World on the SNES for a while and still have yet to complete it fully! Anyway, I'm sure you're getting bored reading the rantings of a 13-year-old boy and I look forward to seeing this letter in the 'Stinkers' column and you slagging me off!
Will

CVG: *Games are getting shorter – it's a fact. The reason is because people's attention spans are also getting shorter, and that's the fault of videogames. It's the same reason there are no reviews of SNES games on the website – it's just that nobody can concentrate for long enough to key them in.*



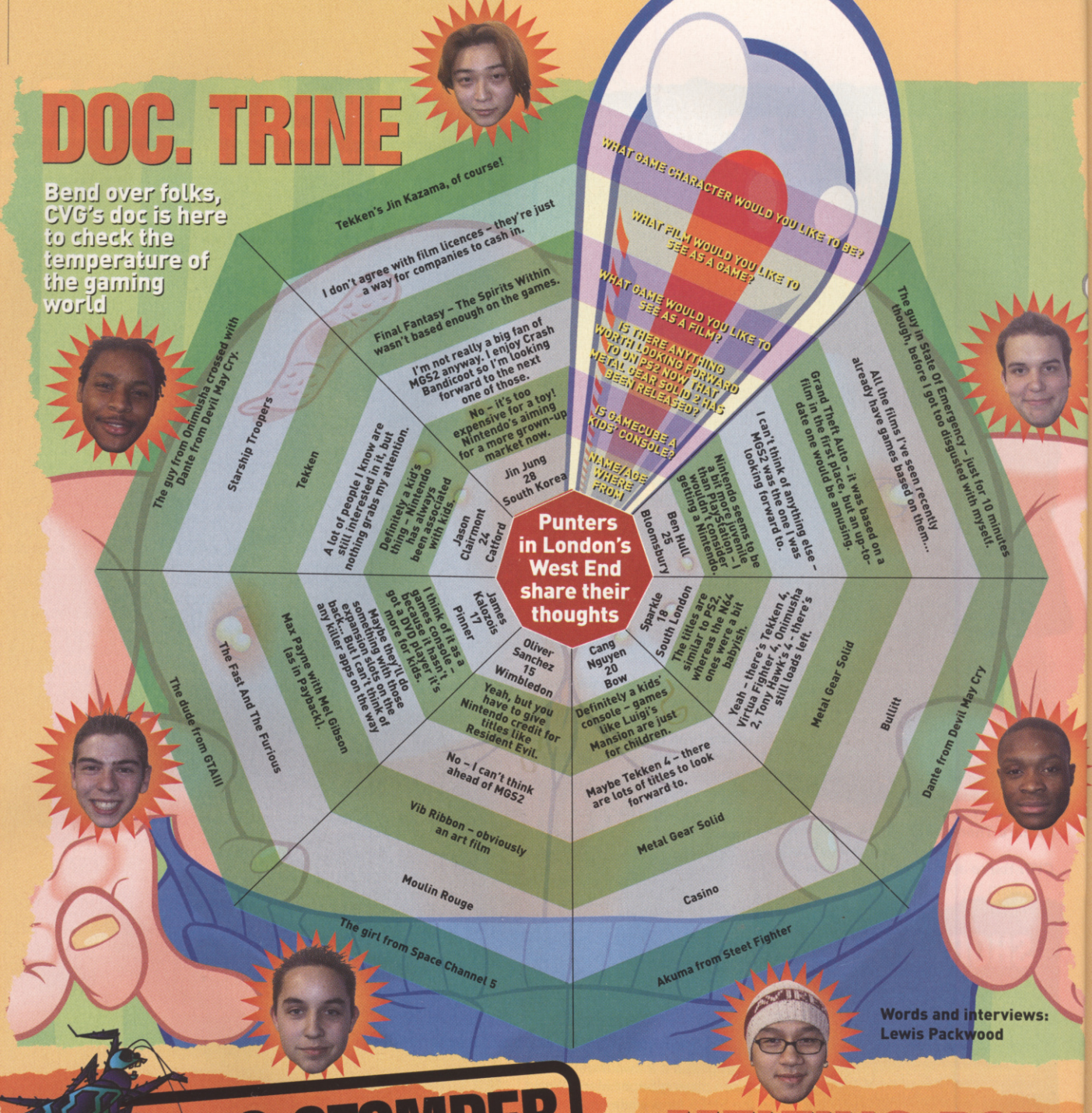
THREAD HEAD

(IN)COHERENT MASS-DEBATING FROM THE FORUMS OF CVG.COM

non_killing_mech Sun Feb 24 09:04 PM	Re: What is your best weapon in a game? Reply Mine is any 9mm Pistol because it's light and easy to carry
UK_Gary Sun Feb 24 09:06 PM	Re: What is your best weapon in a game? Reply Crowbar
Biscuit 2K Sun Feb 24 09:06 PM	Re: What is your best weapon in a game? Reply The SA80 from Ghost Recon. Superbly accurate at distance on single shot & even better at close range on automatic.
non_killing_mech Sun Feb 24 09:06 PM	Re: What is your best weapon in a game? Reply Do you want my blue crowbar? I like my yellow one better!
The_shoeman Sun Feb 24 09:07 PM	Re: What is your best weapon in a game? Reply It's a toughie but the shotgun from Soldier Of Fortune, magnum and knife aren't far behind
cherryeater Sun Feb 24 09:14 PM	Re: What is your best weapon in a game? Reply Exploding sheep. It's gotta be exploding sheep. Who can honestly say that it isn't exploding sheep? Oh, everyone above and probably below this post. Oh well – I'll be around...
non_killing_mech Sun Feb 24 09:30 PM	Re: What is your best weapon in a game? Reply Meaning of the word weapon. An instrument of attack or defence in combat, as a gun, missile, or sword. Zoology. A part or organ, such as a claw or stinger, used by an animal in attack or defence. A sheep is fine!
cherryeater Sun Feb 24 09:39 PM	Re: What is your best weapon in a game? Reply Thanks for that!
Pickster Sun Feb 24 10:01 PM	Re: What is your best weapon in a game? Reply I prefer the banana bomb to the exploding sheep. Much more destructive.
RAKEYOHN Sun Feb 24 11:28 PM	Re: What is your best weapon in a game? Reply I quite liked the cerebal bore in Turok, and the farsight gun in Perfect Dark. If it bleeds, we can kill it!
DeAtH021 Mon Feb 25 11:00 AM	Re: What is your best weapon in a game? Reply The Mole bomb... now i'm not talking about the crappy thing that they've made it now, i'm talking about the one from the original Worms, as in when this went off there would be about 25% of the entire map left, the rest was destroyed !!! NOW THAT WAS A WEAPON!
Boydag Mon Feb 25 11:30 AM	Re: What is your best weapon in a game? Reply The chainsaw in Doom was cool but I would say the old grannies or the super sheep in worms armaggedon. Splendid!!!
T_elshaw Mon Feb 25 11:52 AM	Re: What is your best weapon in a game? Reply Possibly the Carpet Bomb on Worms Armaggedon, or the concrete donkey.
HRGiger_ Mon Feb 25 11:55 AM	Re: What is your best weapon in a game? Reply The Hyper blaster in Quake 2. The way it twitched when you weren't firing as if it was itching to destroy.

DOC. TRINE

Bend over folks, CVG's doc is here to check the temperature of the gaming world



Words and interviews: Lewis Packwood

BUG STOMPER

TELL US ABOUT THOSE GAMING GLITCHES

We've all seen them. Sometimes they're just amusing little glitches. Other times they're horrific balls-ups that ruin whole games. Bugs – no matter how hard they try, they can never quite get rid of them. So to make sure fellow players know where to expect a code cockroach, let us know when you find one and we'll print the worst offenders. Send any crime candidates you come across to mailbag.cvg@dennis.co.uk and allow us to do the rest.

METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SONS OF LIBERTY

Format: PS2

Nothing in this game is really solid. For example, if you hold up a guard and stand really close to him, your gun and sometimes your hand will stick right into him. Also, if you blow them up sometimes part of them will disappear through a wall. Maybe it should be called Metal Gear Not Solid. *From Gavin Tracey*

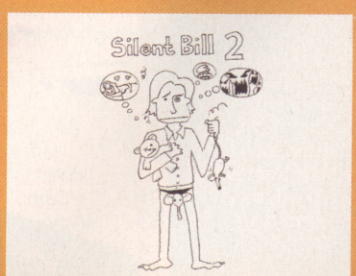
If you get up close and too personal, your gun may plunge straight into him

MELTING POT

SEND US YOUR GAME IDEAS

Silent Bill 2

In a dramatic twist in the opening sequence of Silent Bill 2, we discover that Bill is not a mute – he doesn't talk simply because he's too nuts to utter a single word. Your adventure sees you wandering through huge foggy landscapes scouring boot sales in search of stupid objects. Once you've collected a pile of tat you must take it to Bill to see if it unlocks some of his memories, helping him to overcome his madness. In the final climactic battle you go head to head with the mean boot sale organiser who holds the key to Bill's recovery!



© Mooper

YOU REVIEW

MEDAL OF HONOR: ALLIED ASSAULT

The AI in MOH:AA isn't that good. Your soldiers on the tank mission just run into sniper fire and don't seem to care. Also, the game is just too damn short. Half-Life lives!
-PSY-

Medal Of Honor – great game but ridiculously short. Yes, I know it has multiplayer support, but personally I think that paying £29.95 for a little over 12 hours of entertainment is a bit off. Half-Life is still the King!
BOSSMONKEYMAN

Good game with very nice graphics and a plot that almost matches up to Half-Life. Pity about the AI.
UK_GARY

AI's a bit dodgy to say the least, plot-wise it's very good but it still didn't grab me by the cahoonas and not let go like Half-Life did. (Man, I spent every spare minute playing that!) Can't comment on MGS2 as I don't own a PS2 and doubt if I will.
TOOTY 100

Not as good as Half-Life?

Can't deny it looks pretty

METAL GEAR SOLID 2

I haven't played MGS2 and have no intention of doing so either. Does that answer your question?
BOSSMONKEYMAN

The plot's fine. I'm not going to wreck it for everyone but I was happy with the ending. Cracking necks and slamming them in a locker is the high-point of the game.
OMEGARUGAL

Looks absolutely brill. Not sure about the gameplay lifespan but from the movies and images I've seen this could turn out to be one of the best games of the year. Maybe even worth buying a PS2 for.
UK_GARY

MGS2 looks amazing but the reviews that I have seen say that it's too much like a film – this isn't what we want from a stealth game. If this is true then it's a crying shame that the two have been mixed. Maybe Kojima should make a film so he can do two great things separately rather than trying to mix them.
ROBISGENIUS2

MGS2: Can't wait till the 8th. Getting it in my lunch break so that it's not sold out in the evening with everyone buying it after school . Played the demo non-stop, and MGS1 was the best PSone game, so I can't wait. Definitely Game Of The Year.
DODGY_DAVE

ACTION REPLAY

GROOVY GAMING GEAR OF YESTERYEAR
#10: BBC B

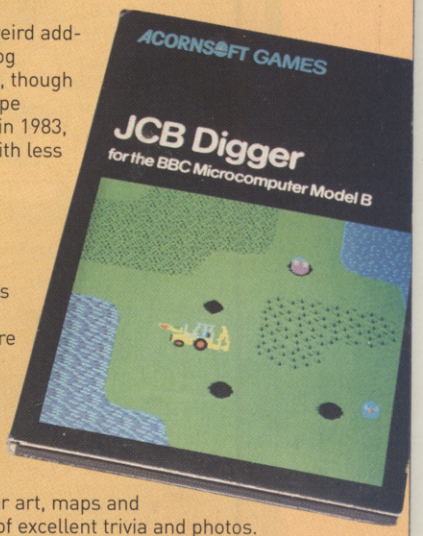
Year released: 1982
Manufacturer: Acorn Ltd

DID YOU KNOW?
The BBC was installed in schools lucky enough to afford it as an educational machine. This was excellent leverage for persuading parents to shell out £399 for the home – where it would be used extensively for pirating games and late night Killer Gorilla sessions.

WHAT IS IT?
A home computer with 32k memory and an excellent version of BASIC, which meant that even code-dunces could bash out half-decent programs. The computer was given life by the BBC (hence the name) and was used throughout the '80s on educational TV programmes. Remember Micro Live where Ian Macnought-Davies and cronies bored us senseless for half an hour with the promise of some new games footage at the end of the programme?

WHY DO I WANT ONE?
This was a time when copyright was pretty much ignored and arcade game rip-offs were rife. Hopper, Arcadians, Snapper, Mr Wiz and Rocket Raid were blatant and brilliant arcade copies. The original version of seminal space opera Elite by Acornsoft also came out on the BBC. To rise to Elite ranking required over 6500 enemy kills and earned you the right to send away for a special badge! Check out www.iancgbell.clara.net/elite.

LOOK OUT FOR...
There's nothing much in the way of weird add-ons for the BBC, apart from the analog joysticks that were ahead of their time, though the disk drive will save you hours of tape loading. The Acorn Electron, released in 1983, was a cheaper cut-down BBC Micro with less room for expansion and zero games compatibility – you've been warned!



WHERE CAN I GET ONE?
BBCs are a favourite with local classifieds, probably placed by parents who have found the things yellowing away in a corner of the attic. Make sure you don't end up with a BBC A – this model looks exactly the same but only had 16k of memory and bugger-all games were ever made for it.

ALTERNATIVELY
Go to www.stairwaytohell.com for cover art, maps and ROM downloads. www.8bs.com is full of excellent trivia and photos. www.nvg.ntnu.no/bbc/index.php3 is great for game ROMs, though it's illegal to download some games unless you have the originals.

THE DOGHOUSE

BEWARE: THESE CHEATS CAN BITE!

Our fluffy mutt has a nose for cheats. In fact, other than peeing on trees, there's nothing beats a good whiff of foul play. So if you sniff out any decent cheats, send them in. Just make sure they're good ones, cos Hunter goes for the nuts.

WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

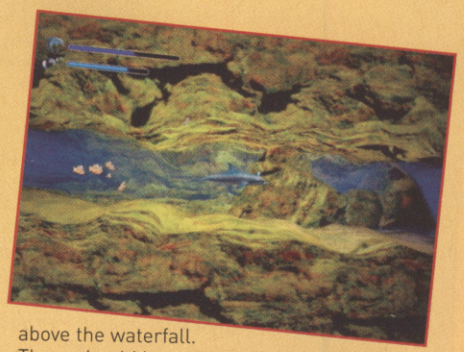
AQUARIUM: From the main menu go to Extras and then Secrets. Type in: 'wibblywobbly'. Works in Time Trial.
MORE POWER: From the main menu go to Extras and then Secrets. Type in: 'evopower'. Works in Time Trial.

REMOVE BODY PARTS: From the main menu go to Extras and then Secrets. Type in: 'thats stupid'. Works in Time Trial.

UPSIDE DOWN: From the main menu go to Extras and then Secrets. Type in: 'ontheceiling'. Works in Time Trial.
PSYCHEDELIC GRAPHICS: From the main menu go to Extras and then Secrets. Type in: 'imgoingcrazy'. Works in Time Trial.

ECCO THE DOLPHIN: DEFENDER OF THE FUTURE

PASSAGES FROM GENESIS EXTRA LEVEL: Complete the game. After finishing, choose level select from the main menu and scroll down to Up and Down, which should be flashing. Near the glyph to the side is a boulder. Push this boulder down the hole with a strong current so that you can swim behind it to get through to a lower level. Collect the Power of Sonar and sonar the lights in the four small towers to open the floor. Swim down to a 2D-bonus level.
PATHWAYS FROM NOWHERE EXTRA LEVEL: Complete the game. After finishing, choose level select from the main menu and scroll down to Up and Down, which should be flashing. Swim up the long tunnel to the pool



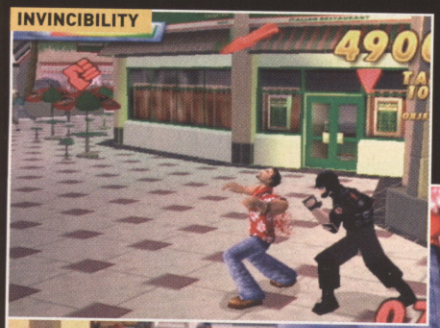
above the waterfall.
There should be a ring to one side. Find five small crystals (do not go over the waterfall); one is behind some wood, two are in the air and two are sat in the pool. Take each one through the ring. Once all five have been used, follow the rainbow into a side pool to enter a 2D-bonus level.
DOLPHIN SOCCER MINI-GAME: In the Powers of Levitation level, swim into the central structure and down to a Clan dolphin. One of the sidewalls hides a secret room containing a football and a Power of Stealth. Touch the football then continue the level as normal. Finish the game then choose level select. At the end you'll find a bonus mini-game of Dolphin Soccer to get stuck into.

STATE OF EMERGENCY

What could be more fun than running around destroying things and punching people? Er, nothing – so long as you don't do it in real life. So next time you go shopping you don't pick up a bin and throw it through a window, otherwise you will go to jail. Trust us on this one.

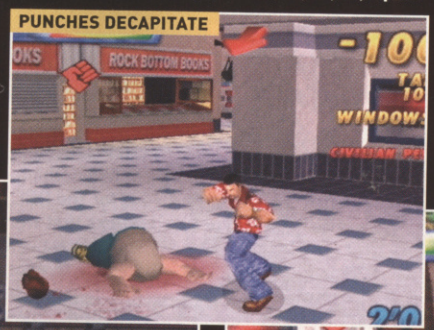
During gameplay quickly press L1, L2, R1, R2, X

INVINCIBILITY



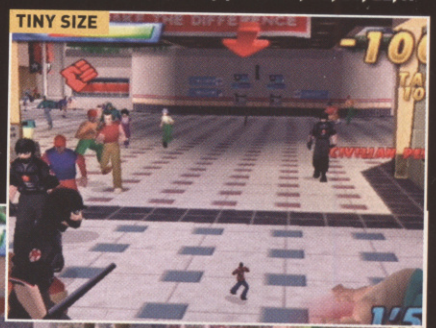
During gameplay quickly press L1, L2, R1, R2, Square

PUNCHES DECAPITATE

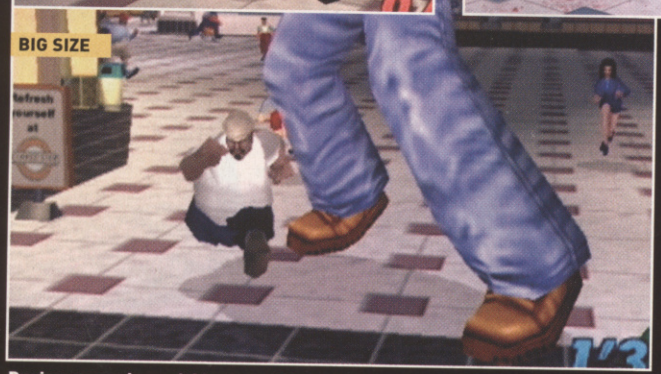


During gameplay quickly press R1, R2, L1, L2, X

TINY SIZE



BIG SIZE



During gameplay quickly press R1, R2, L1, L2, Triangle

NORMAL SIZE

During gameplay quickly press R1, R2, L1, L2, Circle

DARK ARENA

KEYS: At the password screen enter KNGHTSFR
MAP: At the password screen enter LMSPLLNG
WEAPONS: At the password screen enter THRBLDNS
AMMO: At the password screen enter NDCRSDRT
HEALTH: At the password screen enter HLGNDSBR

SSX TRICKY

Master Code: At the title screen hold down L1+R1, then press X, Triangle, Right, Circle, Square, Down, Triangle, Square, Left, Circle, X, Up. Then let go of L1+R1; a noise will confirm correct entry. You must enter this code before you can activate any of the others.
DJ Character: At the title screen hold down L1+R1, then press X (2), Right, X (2), Down, X (2), Left, X (2), Up. Then let go of L1+R1 and a noise will confirm correct entry. Choose any boarder. They will be replaced once on the course by a man in blue with decks on his back.
Full stat points: At the title screen hold down L1+R1, then press Triangle (2), Right, Triangle (2), Down, X (2), Left, X (2), Up. Then let go of L1+R1; a noise will confirm correct entry. All the boarders will now have full stats.
Mallora Board: At the title screen hold down L1+R1, then press X (2), Right, Circle (2), Down, Triangle (2), Left, Square (2), Up. Then let go of L1+R1; a noise will confirm correct entry. Choose Elise and start a track. She will start with the Mallora board and a blue outfit.

HALO

Unfortunately, there are no known button cheats for this game at the moment but it's so good we thought we'd give you some tips on playing it anyway.

Ammo is scarce so club foes with your gun

Do this by getting behind your enemies or smacking flood creatures when they jump

Sit back and wait for battles to finish, then pick off the winners

Wait for your shield to recharge instead of taking hits on your health

PARIS-DAKAR RALLY

ALL THE CARS: Start a new game with the name ILUMBERJACK in order to unlock all the different vehicles.

INDUSTRY GIANT

When you're in Info mode, click on a town then choose to rename it as Scrooge. This'll get you fifty million.

SMUGGLER'S RUN 2

GLASS CAR: Pause the game and press Left, Up, Right, Down, Right, Up, Left, L2.
UNLIMITED COUNTERMEASURES: When Countermeasures are available, pause the game and tap in R3, R3, R3, R1, R1, R2, R2.

DEAD OR ALIVE 3

COSTUMES: You'll see that each character has two costumes available from the start. However, by choosing either costume with a different button you can get different colours and, with Kasumi, different hair even.

YOUR BEST TIPS

Every month the best reader tip will be printed and will score one of the latest games as a prize. Send your tips to: barny_zoeller@dennis.co.uk or

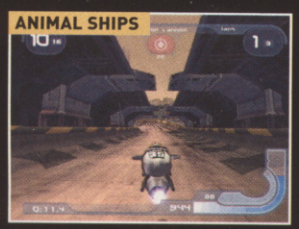
THE DOGHOUSE,
COMPUTER AND VIDEO GAMES,
DENNIS PUBLISHING,
30 CLEVELAND STREET,
LONDON W1T 4JD

EVIL TWIN CYPRIEN'S CHRONICLES

UNLIMITED LIVES: Enter the cheats menu and press X, Square, Triangle, X, Circle
SUPER SHOTS: Enter the cheats menu and press Circle, Triangle, Triangle, Square, X
RAPID FIRE: Enter the cheats menu and press Square, Triangle, X, Triangle, Circle
SIGHTS: Enter the cheats menu and press Circle, Circle, X, Triangle, Square
SNIPE: Enter the cheats menu and press Square, Circle, X, Triangle, Circle
BOUNCES: Enter the cheats menu and press Circle, Square, Circle, Triangle, X

WIPEOUT FUSION

This is one of the fastest racers out there and has been the cause of many a blistered thumb the nation over. So guess what? We thought we'd get you a cheat to make it even more scorchingly quick. And one that turns you into a sheep. To input the cheats enter the Extras menu and select Cheats, then bash out one of the following codes.



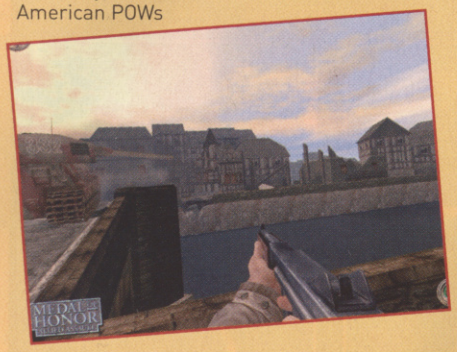
Triangle, O, O, Triangle, X.

X, O, Triangle, Square, X

Square, X, X, X, Triangle.

MEDAL OF HONOR: ALLIED ASSAULT

MEDAL 1: In the second part of the first mission you must rescue both British and American POWs



MEDAL 2: In the second part of mission 2, maintain your cover, steal the officer's papers from the harbour and the manifest from the sub, then finish the mission
MEDAL 3: Just survive mission 3
MEDAL 4: In the third part of mission 4 blow up the two Tiger tanks outside the manor
MEDAL 5: In the second part of mission five make sure all the 3-tank crew survive
MEDAL 6: Complete mission 5
MEDAL 7: At least six rangers must survive from the train in mission 6 – and that doesn't include you

WRECKLESS

AUV: Complete mission A-9
DRAGON-SPL: Complete mission A-1
SUPER CAR: Complete mission B-1
TANK-90: Complete mission B-8
TIGER-SPL: Complete mission A-8
YAKUZA CAR: Complete mission B-9

SPYRO: SEASON OF ICE

Jon Farren has sent in this series of great cheats for the latest Spyro game on Game Boy Advance. Try them!

OPEN PORTALS: At the Press Start screen quickly tap in Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Up, Down, A
99 LIVES: At the Press Start screen quickly tap in Left, Right, Right, Right, Down, Up, Right, Up, A

GRAND THEFT AUTO III

HOOKERS: Avert your young eyes. In GTAIII get yourself a flashy car such as the Mafia Sentinel and make sure you've got loads of money. Wait until it's dark, then cruise around looking for a hooker. Stop the car. If they get in, drive to a secluded location. Your car will start bouncing up and down. You will see that your money is also going down while your health is going up. Doing this you can get your health over 100 up to 125. Sent in by Jason Reed via email.

TWISTED METAL: BLACK

YELLOW JACKET: Drive into the sewers in the lower part of the Junkyard and smash the console to unlock secret character Yellow Jacket.
WARTHOG: In Suburbs enter the carnival area and drive over the ridge to the left so that you land on the building on the other side. Shoot the roof in, drop down and destroy the console to unlock Warthog.
AXEL: On the Freeway level enter the construction area. Shoot the crane situated to the left so that the box it holds drops. Break it open and you'll reveal Axel.

REALLY STUCK ?

Absolutely stumped on a game? Ridiculed by your mates? There is hope: The Computer And Video Games Tips Helpline.

0906 466 4659

Open seven days a week, 8am-11pm. On the very rare occasion that they can't help, your query will be passed on to a support team, who guarantees to find you an answer within 24 hours.

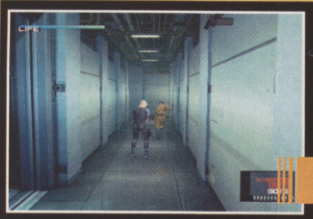
Calls cost £1.50 per minute at all times. Charges will appear on your standard telephone bill. If you do not pay the bill yourself, seek permission from whoever does before calling. In case of problems, please call Customer Services on 0870 800 6155.

MANSLAUGHTER: In Prison Passage wait for the ship to dock then drive down to the bottom of the level. Shoot some crates on the left side of the bottom of the ship to make a ramp. Drive up, shoot the ship and a door will open. Go in and blast away at the console to unlock Manslaughter.
MINION: Unlock all the secret characters, then complete the game with every normal and every secret character to unlock Minion. Minion is the big fire-breathing truck boss. When you play as him you will be smaller and less powerful but no less capable.

MGS2: SONS OF LIBERTY

Nearly all of the soldiers you see wandering around in Metal Gear Solid 2 have a dog tag hung around their necks. Getting hold of these dog tags will unlock extra items for you to play with next time.

However, in order to secure all the dog tags in the game, you will have to accost every single guard on every difficulty setting – this means that you must play through the game a total of five times to gain all of the tags. Some guards will need to be shot in the leg with either the SOCOM or USP first. If you've put a guard to sleep you can wake him up, either by using the Coolant Spray or by picking him up and dropping him a lot.

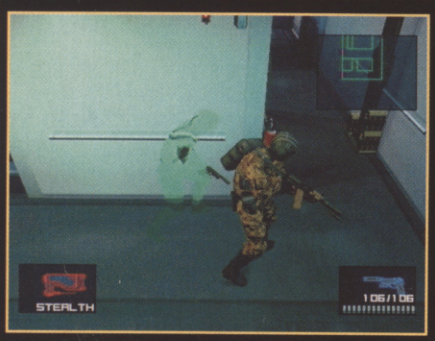


Find a guard and wait until his back is turned, then sneak up behind him stealthily

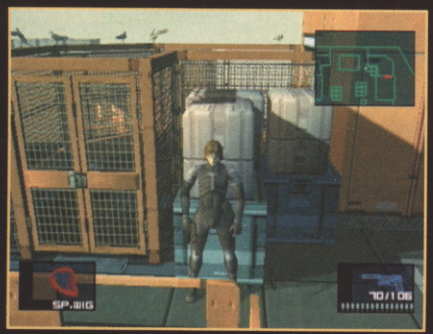
Go into first-person view and point your gun at the back of his head. Snake/Raiden will shout "Freeze!"

The guard will put his hands up. Keep the fire button held down, leave first-person and hold the aim button

Run in front of the guard and re-enter first-person mode. Point your gun at his head or crotch



In the Tanker with Snake get 46 tags for an Infinite ammo bandanna and 78 tags for Stealth Camo, then start a new game to use them



In the Plant with Raiden get 73 for Infinite ammo wig, 121 for Stealth camo, 170 for Infinite grip wig and 218 for infinite oxygen wig

The guard should quake with fear and drop his dog tags. If he doesn't follow through with this, just shoot him in the leg first with a real gun

HERDY GERDY

HERDING STICK: In Meadow Village beat Yggdrasil's record by herding some Doops into a pen and Yggdrasil will reward you with the Herding Stick.

MAGIC BOOTS: When Grandma asks you to fetch Sara, go to the side area and herd the animals. She will then unlock an area, where you'll find the boots on a rock arch.

FLUTE: In Midmear go through the double doors and talk to the wizard. Beat his record in the mini-game by herding all the Doops and trapping all the Gromps and he will give you his Flute.

FEATHER: In Belders Spring there are some Gromp traps and a Bleep pen with bones above them. Entice Gromps and Bleeps into these pens and you can then collect the Feather off of the central mound.

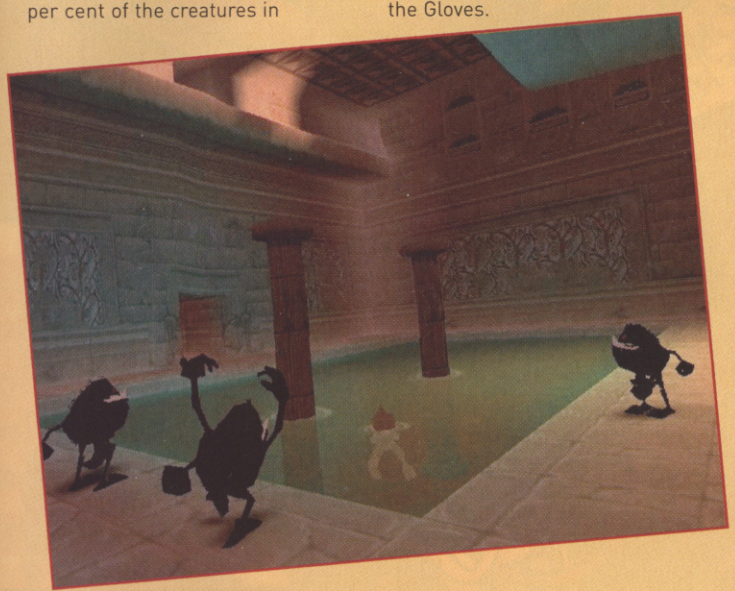
HAMMER: When you've herded 50 per cent of the creatures in

Moonlit Peaks, make your way to the top of the level and through the double doors. Sneak past Poric to the pot of gold to get his hammer.

HORN: Go to Elven Wood and talk to Elfrin. Herd all the Doops and Honks into their pens and trap the three Gromps in under six minutes. He will give you his horn.

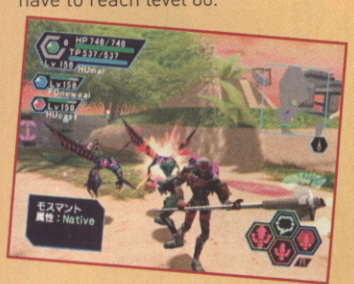
SUIT: You get this from Skrag's nest and it lets you swim. Now you can go back through older levels and get all the bells that are in deep water.

GLOVES: Just find your way to the mole in Crystal Lake to acquire the Gloves.



PHANTASY STAR ONLINE V.2

DIFFICULTIES: When playing offline to get to the next difficulty level you need to beat the last boss of the game regardless of what level your character is at. You can also play on harder difficulties online without having to finish the last boss first. Playing on harder difficulties will make levelling up quicker. To access difficulty levels online, just make sure your character's level is high enough. To play Hard difficulty it needs to be above level 20, and for Very Hard, above level 40. To play the new Ultimate difficulty you will have to reach level 80.



BOXING FEVER

Here are some handy passwords for you:

AMATEUR SERIES	90HG6738
TOP CONTENDER	H7649DH5
PRO AM SERIES	2GG48HD9
PROF. SERIES	8G3D97B7
WORLD TITLE	B3G58318
SURVIVAL MODE	G51FF888

JAK & DAXTER:THE PRECURSOR LEGACY

Finish the game with over 101 Power Cells for a slightly different ending where Jak and Daxter get to see what's behind the Precursor Door.

TIPS, CHEATS & WALKTHROUGHS

The Cheatmistress Presents

CHEATS UNLIMITED

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TOP WALKTHROUGHS PLUS OVER 10,000 CHEATS & TIPS

A = 0 1
Abe's Odysee
Ace Combat 4
Action Man Dest. X
Advance Wars
Age of Empires 2
Airblade
Alex F's Play Man 2001
Alex F's Player Manager
Alien Resurrection
Alien Trilogy
Alone In the Dark 4
Alundra
Alundra 2
Amerzone
Army Men Air Attack
Army Men Sgt's Heroes 2
Army Men: Land Sea Air
Army Men: Lock & Load
Army Men: Omega Sold.
Atlantis

B = 0 2
Baldur's Gate
Batman Vengeance
Blade
Bloody Roar 3
Bouncer
Breath of Fire
Breath of Fire 4
Broken Sword 1
Broken Sword 2
Bugs & Taz: Time Busters
Burnout

C = 0 3
C & C: Red Alert
C & C: Tiberian Sun
C-12 Final Resistance
Champ. Manager 2000
Champ. Manager 2001
Chase the Express
Colin McRae Rally 2
Command & Conquer
Conkers Bad Fur Day
Constructor
Cossaks: European Wars
Crash Bandicoot
Crash Bandicoot 2
Crash Bandicoot 3
Crash Bash
Crash Team Racing
Crazy Taxi
Cricket 2002

D = 0 4
D Mirra BMX: Max Remix
D. Nukem: L. of Babes
D. Nukem: Time to Kill
Dark Cloud
Dave Mirra BMX 2
David Beckham Soccer
Dead or Alive 2
Devil May Cry
Die Hard Trilogy
Digimon World
Digimon World 2
Dino Crisis
Dino Crisis 2
Disc World 2
Discworld Noir
Disney's Dinosaur
Doom
Dracula Resurrection
Dracula Last Sanctuary
Dragonball Z: Final Bout
Driver
Driver 2
Dropship
Dune
Dynasty Warriors 2

E = 0 5
Eighteen Wheeler
Empire Earth
Escape Monkey Island
Evil Dead
Exhumed
Extermination
Extreme G 3

F = 0 6
FA P. Lgue F'ball Man. 00
FA P. Lgue F'ball Man. 01
Fear Effect
Fear Effect: Retro Helix
FIFA 2000
FIFA 2001
FIFA 2002
Final Fantasy 7
Final Fantasy 8
Final Fantasy 9
Formula 1 2001
Fur Fighters

G = 0 7
Gangsters 2
Gauntlet Legends
Gold Pokemon
Golden Sun
Goldeneye
Gran Turismo
Gran Turismo 2
Gran Turismo 3
Grand Theft Auto
Grand Theft Auto 2
Grand Theft Auto 3
Gun Griffon Blaze
Gundam Battle Assault

H = 0 8
Half Life
Halo
Harry Potter
Harvest Moon
Headhunter
Hidden & Dangerous
Hogs of War

I = 0 9
In Cold Blood
ISS Pro Evolution
ISS Pro Evolution 2
Italian Job

J = 1 0
Jak & Daxter
James Bond: Goldeneye
James Bond: TWINE

K = 1 1
Knockout Kings 2001

L = 1 2
Legacy of Kain
Legend of Dragoon
Legends of Wrestling
LMA Manager 2001
LMA Manager 2002
Lotus Challenge
Luigi's Mansion

M = 1 3
Mario Kart Super Circuit
Martian Gothic
Mat Hoffman's BMX
Max Payne
Medal of Honor
Medal of Honor All. Ass.
Medal of Honor Underg.
MediEvil
MediEvil 2
Men in Black
Metal Gear Solid
Metal Gear Solid 2
Metropolis Street Racer
Midnight Club
Mission Impossible
Monkey Island (Escape)
Monkey Island Series
Monster Rancher
Mortal Kombat Trilogy
Mummy Returns
MX 2002

O = 1 5
Oni
Onimusha: Warlords
Operation Winback

P = 1 6
Parasite Eve 2
Perfect Dark
Pokemon Crystal
Pokemon Gold
Pokemon Red
Pokemon Stadium
Pokemon Yellow
Premier Manager 2000
Premier Manager 99
Pro Evolution Soccer
Project Eden
Project Gotham Racing
Project IGI

R = 1 8
Rainbow Six
Rayman
Rayman 2
Ready 2 Rumble Round 2
Red Faction
Resident Evil
Resident Evil 2
Resident Evil 3: Nemesis
Resident Evil: C. Veronica
Resident Evil: Code V. X
Return to C. Wolfenstein
Robot Wars
Rogue Spear
Roller Coaster Tycoon
Rumble Racing
Rune: Viking Warlord

S = 1 9
S Palmer's Snowboarder
Shadow of Memories
Shadowman
Shenmue
Shenmue 2
Silent Hill
Silent Hill 2
Simpson's Road Rage
Simpsons Wrestling
Sims
Sims Hot Date
Sims House Party
Sims: Livin' It Up
Sky Odyssey
Smackdown 2
Smackdown! Just Bring It
Smugglers Run
Smugglers Run 2
Soldier of Fortune
Sonic Adventure
Sonic Adventure 2
Soul Reaver
Soul Reaver 2
South Park
Spec Ops: Covert Assault
Spec Ops: Rangers Elite
Spec Ops: Stealth Patrol
Spiderman
Spiderman 2
Spy Hunter
Spyro 2: Ripto's Rage
Spyro 3: Year of Dragon
Spyro: Season of Ice
SSX Tricky
Star Trek: Invasion
Star Wars Jedi P. Batt.
Star Wars: Phant. M.
Star Wars: R. Lead.
Star Wars: Rogue Squad.
Star Wars: Star Fighter
State of Emergency
Summoner
Syphon Filter
Syphon Filter 2
Syphon Filter 3

T = 2 0
Technomage
Tekken 3
Tekken Tag Tournament
Tenchu 2
The Italian Job
The World is Not Enough
Theme Hospital
Theme Park World
This is Football 2002
Thunderhawk: Op.
Time Crisis 2
Time Splitters
TOCA World Touring Cars
Tomb Raider
Tomb Raider 2
Tomb Raider 3
Tomb Raider 4
Tomb Raider 5
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater
Tony Hawks Pro Skater 2
Tony Hawk's 3
Top Gun: Combat Zones
Toy Story 2
Turok: Dinosaur Hunter
Twisted Metal Black

U = 2 1
Urban Chaos

V = 2 2
Vagrant Story
Vanishing Point

W = 2 3
Warzone 2100
World C Snooker 2002
World Is Not Enough
World's S. Police Chases
Worms Armageddon
WRC: World Rally Champ
WWF No Mercy
WWF Road Wrestlemania
WWF Smackdown 2
WWF Smackdown 3
WWF Wrestlemania 2000

X = 2 4
X-Files
X-Men Mut. Academy 2
X-Squad

Z = 2 6
Zelda
Zelda: Majora's Mask
Zelda: Oracle of Ages
Zelda: Oracle of Seasons

0-9 = 2 7
007 Agent Under Fire
007 Racing

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PlayStation2 SEGA SATURN GAME BOY COLOR GAME BOY ADVANCE

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24hr Customer Service: (Freephone) 0800 081 6000

FORMAT: GAMECUBE **OUT:** MAY 3 ONWARDS **WORDS & SCREENSHOTS:** MIKE COOPER

GC.UK

CVG's definitive guide to GameCube's UK launch, what the future holds, and the Nintendo difference

Your wingman guards your left flank in Rogue Leader

It's cool to be square. In just over two weeks Nintendo's beautiful little box will finally land on UK soil, closely followed by an awesome posse of superstars, including Luigi, Link, Darth Vader, Chris Redfield, Sonic, and some hairy fella wearing white gloves and snug-fitting dungarees. Time to roll out the red carpet, crack open the bubbly and celebrate, for a new era of gaming has been born.

Luigi does his A-Team impression by turning a standard vacuum cleaner into a big, fat flame-thrower

THE N-FACTOR

There's a natural aura of wonder and brilliance surrounding Nintendo, born of the stunning quality and originality of its hardware and software. And with the arrival of innovations such as the GC/GBA connector you can be sure that when you join clan Nintendo you're going to be treated to some truly unique VIP gaming experiences. Furthermore, unlike the barren days of N64, Cube has got huge support from all the major third-party developers, which means that owners of the console will get all the non-exclusive big-name titles that appear on PS2 and Xbox too.

CATWALK MODEL

Oozing more sex appeal than Kylie in those skimpy silver knickers, GameCube is arguably the most desirable-looking console ever built. And at half the price of Xbox you don't have to sell your soul to the devil and pimp your ass out on the local street corner to get your sweaty mitts on one.

This unprecedented launch price should be enough to lure any Nintendo-phobes, and with a killer line-up of exclusive titles such as Rogue Leader, Luigi's Mansion, Monkey Ball, Smash Bros. Melee and Pikmin all appearing in the first month, you might as well throw your PS2 and Xbox ties out the window and start two-timing, because this is one bandwagon definitely worth hopping on.

The high-wire action in Super Monkey Ball is sure to make your palms sweat

The GC version of Tony Hawk's is every bit as extreme and impressive as the PS2 masterpiece. No online option though

It's intense shoulder-to-shoulder action all the way in Blue Storm

NINTENDO'S HEAVYWEIGHT BARGAIN

There has never been a better time to buy into Nintendo and get your self kitted out with a class set-up. Why? Well, for the price of an Xbox and a game (£345) you can buy a GameCube (£170), a GBA (£70), a GC game (£40), a GBA game (£35), a memory card (£15), a GC/GBA connector (£10) and still have a fiver left. Apart from the fact that on offer here is a selection of gaming gems that can't and won't be found on any other console, any gamer with a soul couldn't possibly pass up such an honest bargain. And no, we didn't get paid to say this! A fact's a fact.

THIS LOT EQUALS THIS LOT

Whoa! Both of Nintendo's previous home consoles cost heaps more than GameCube when they launched in the UK. A very bold statement indeed! We like

LUIGI'S MANSION

ESSENTIAL CVG ESSENTIAL

REVIEW

COST: £39.99
OUT: MAY 3
PLAYERS: 1
DEVELOPER: NINTENDO
PUBLISHER: NINTENDO

Luigi has been well and truly plucked from the gloom of Mario's mammoth shadow and thrown head-first into the spotlight, with Luigi's Mansion leading the charge of Nintendo games on Cube. But can Mario's skinny sibling become a superstar in his own right? Hell, yes!

WHO YA GONNA CALL?

Luigi is hunting for his bro in a huge haunted house, armed with a vacuum cleaner to capture ghosts, and he must solve puzzles in order to acquire keys to unlock new rooms along the way. If you're not up to scratch with all this, CVG hopes you get well soon because you've probably been in a coma for well over a year.

Solve a puzzle and you'll be rewarded with the key to another room in the mansion

Although the basic spectre-sucking theme might seem like a Ghost Busters rip-off, when you start playing Luigi's Mansion you soon realise that it's a unique, innovative and charming game. A giant baby tries to squash you with an onslaught of body splashes and then commands troops of rocking horses to stampede towards you; you're trapped in a room and discover that by sucking up little flame ghosts and setting your vacuum to 'blow', it becomes a makeshift flame-thrower that can be used to light all the candles in the room, in turn triggering the door to open... Such moments of

'RED HOT PREVIEWS' 'RED HOT PREVIEWS' 'RED HOT PREVIEWS'

ZELDA

OUT: WINTER 2002

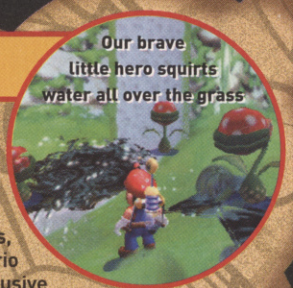
He's definitely going to stay cel-shaded, but Miyamoto has said that he's slightly altered the look of Link's eyes. Old eyes, new eyes, who cares? Fact is, the in-game action looks astonishing, with Link stealthily sneaking his way Snake-like past burly warthog guards, roaming stunning, wooded landscapes and eerie, dimly-lit castle corridors. This game's gonna rock like no other!

SOUL CALIBUR 2

OUT: AUTUMN

The original DC game is arguably still the best beat 'em up ever, and GC is being treated to a sequel that could slice and dice any next gen competitor into tiny little pieces with its dazzling new characters and wicked combos. N64 lacked a decent beat 'em up other than Smash Bros., but thankfully Cube has not been resigned to this same fate: fighters don't get better than this.

EXCLUSIVE PICS



Our brave little hero squirts water all over the grass

MARIO SUNSHINE

OUT: WINTER 2002

Holy crap! Check out Mario's fence-climbing antics, his mint water-spraying backpack, and one of Mario Sunshine's awesome-looking bosses in these exclusive screenshots. In the vein of Super Mario World on SNES, the plumber's next gen outing could possibly be the finest platform game ever: witness the cast of stunning new baddies, mammoth shape-shifting environments, the involvement of Yoshi, and the Miyamoto-inspired innovative action, already demonstrated by the introduction of backpack-based gameplay. UK-bound for winter 2002, Christmas is looking sunnier than ever.

Many of Mario's moves from the 64 version have been included

Press the punch button and spin around to the other side of the fence

SUPER MONKEY BALL

REVIEW

COST: £39.99
OUT: MAY 3
PLAYERS: 1-4
DEVELOPER: AV/SEGA
PUBLISHER: INFOGRAMES

Cry, scream, laugh, puke, rejoice! You can't help but experience intense emotions when you're playing Sega's latest masterpiece. Teetering along a seemingly endless guitar string, suspended above an abyss and tumbling down a narrowing corkscrew ribbon are just a couple of the vertigo-induced adrenalin rushes that Super Monkey Ball offers. Whack this in your GameCube and treat your senses to the kind of buzz that can only otherwise be achieved by plugging yourself into the mains.

MONKEY DISGUISED AS A HAMSTER

It may look cuter than a seal cub in a pram, but Super Monkey Ball is intended for 100 per cent hardcore, ultra skillful, fun-loving gamers. There are over 80 levels of heart-stopping action, which see you steering your monkey

The last level Advanced mode make you want t pull your teeth o with frustration. you'll still love it

The Monkey R mode is just one Party Games ope multiplayer mad

genius occur frequently and help keep you hooked throughout.

The overall gameplay is massively entertaining, the controls beautifully instinctive, and the visuals jaw-dropping, but Luigi's Mansion is crippled by one major flaw: it's far too short. And even though there is some incentive to replay the game in order to achieve a better ranking, you can't help but feel that the game should've been twice the size. Still, the game has more charm and originality in its little finger than most adventure games have in their whole body.

8

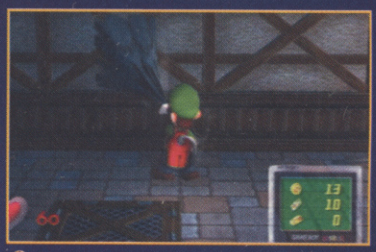
Once you've sucked up one of the spooky baby's big beach balls, fire it back in his face to daze him

SUCK IT AND SEE

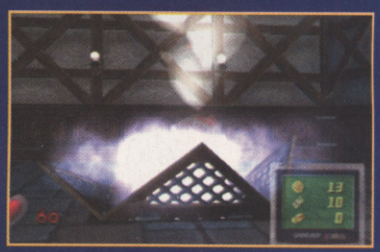
Exploring your surroundings thoroughly is essential for completing the puzzles that crop up. Check every object, look at every wall, suck up every tablecloth or piece of fabric – anything that'll fit in you vacuum cleaner, in fact.

The mirror shows a button on the wall

Press it and a secret area opens up



Suck off a poster to get at another button



But you press it and all hell breaks loose!

'RED HOT PREVIEWS' 'RED HOT PREVIEWS' 'RED HOT PREVIEWS'

METROID PRIME

OUT: TBA

We expected great things from Metroid on GameCube but never did we imagine that it would look so amazing and play with the kind of intensity that could give Halo a run for its money. It throws you headfirst into armies of fast-moving aliens, equips you with a dreamy arsenal of heavy weaponry, all within gorgeously detailed environments. And remember, it's exclusive to Cube.

over brilliantly difficult and fantastically designed Floors, each boasting crazy moving landscapes, ridiculously awkward terrain and killer obstacles. Every level must be completed within a super-harsh time limit. Once you start playing, you'll soon understand the true meaning of the word 'addiction'.

There's tons of replay value to be had, as a result of the Main Game being so gripping, and because SMB has possibly the finest multiplayer gameplay to be found on Cube: the Main Game, Mini-Games, and Party Games are all open for up to four players to enjoy. This is a must-have title for all GameCube owners. There's nothing quite like it!

9

MINI MONKEY FUN

Earn points every time you play the main game, depending on how fast you complete Floors and how far you get. You'll need 2500 points to buy each of the three awesome unlockable mini-games, but it's well worth the effort – once you start bowling and golfing you'll find it's almost impossible to stop.

Monkey Bowling: the King-Pin of console bowling games? Oh yes it is!

Monkey Billiards: truly classic 9-ball action

Monkey Golf: crazy golf just got a bit crazier

ESSENTIAL CVG ESSENTIAL

EXCLUSIVE FIRST LOOK

MARIO GOLF AND TENNIS

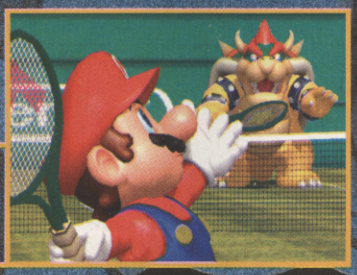
YET AGAIN, MARIO AND CO. MANAGE TO MAKE CACK SPORTS COOL

Mario cracks one off in front of his pals

Four! A diamond stroke by the wee man

Bowser dives, triggering an earth tremor

Mario balances a giant tennis ball on his bonce



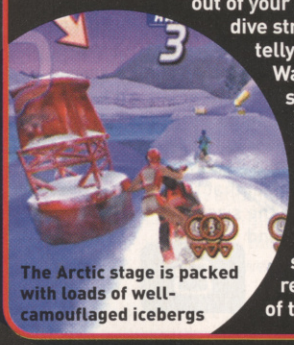
Bowser and Mario go to war in a Wimbledon stylee

WAVE RACE: BLUE

REVIEW

COST: £39.99
OUT: MAY 3
PLAYERS: 1-4
DEVELOPER: NINTENDO
PUBLISHER: NINTENDO

Giant stingrays glide through the sprawling coral reef and dolphins follow you gracefully, as your jet ski cuts across glistening sun-soaked waves. Most of the levels in Blue Storm look like a TV advertisement for paradise, and there's no doubt that when you see this game in motion you'll want to leap out of your living room and dive straight into your telly. But where N64's Wave Race brought something fantastically fresh to the genre of racing games, this GameCube follow-up is little more than a stunningly repackaged version of the original.



The Arctic stage is packed with loads of well-camouflaged icebergs

WISH WE

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SUPER SMASH BROS. MELEE

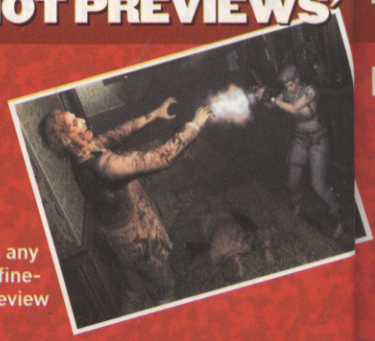
OUT: MAY 24

Warning! Playing this game feels like your eyeballs have been chucked into a pinball machine, with action that sees multiple characters darting about the screen at ridiculously extreme speeds. Super Smash Bros. on Cube is arguably the fastest beat 'em up in history.

RESIDENT EVIL

OUT: AUTUMN 2002

Hardcore fans might turn their noses up at the prospect of remaking such a classic game, but this gruesomely realistic revamp makes the original look rubbish. Boasting more special effects and stunning monsters than any horror movie, Resi on Cube is one fine-looking game. Check out CVG's preview on page 42 for the full low-down.



ON CUBE?

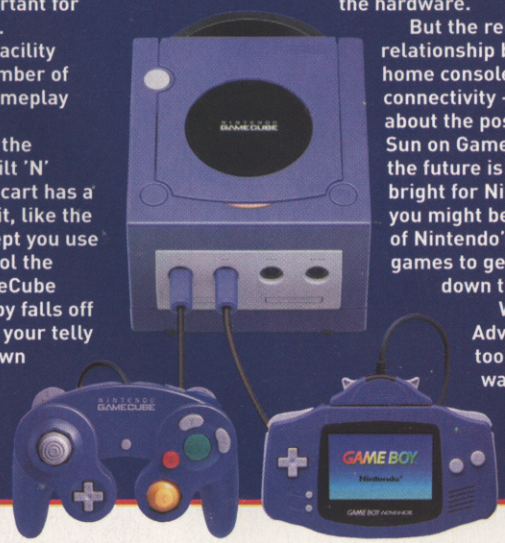
GOLDEN HORIZON

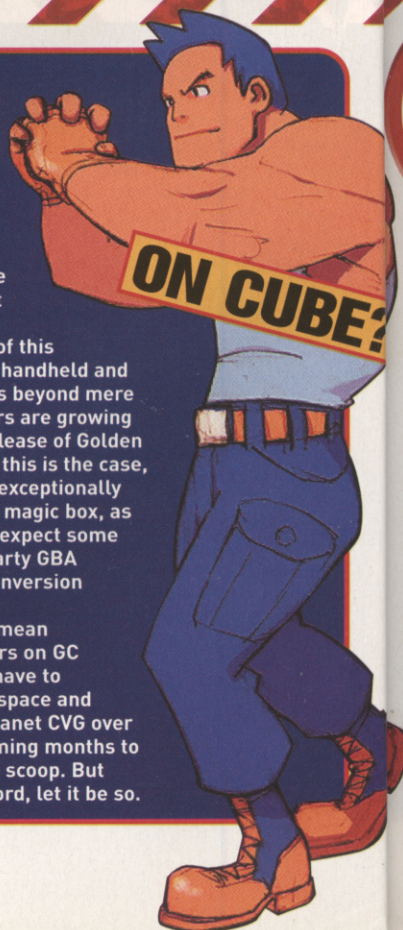
Even though GC/GBA connectivity hasn't been hugely exploited as yet, with only Sonic Adventure 2 utilising the hardware at launch, the close relationship between both consoles is massively important for Nintendo's future.

This link-up facility generates a number of exciting new gameplay possibilities, as demonstrated in the upcoming Kirby Tilt 'N' Tumble. The GBA cart has a motion sensor in it, like the GBC version, except you use your GBA to control the action in the GameCube game. When Kirby falls off a platform on your telly he drops down onto your handheld screen, where you have to try to get him back up into the GC game. Mint! And third-party developers have made it clear that they're as keen as Nintendo to exploit the hardware.

But the relevance of this relationship between handheld and home console extends beyond mere connectivity – rumours are growing about the possible release of Golden Sun on GameCube. If this is the case, the future is looking exceptionally bright for Nintendo's magic box, as you might be able to expect some of Nintendo's first-party GBA games to get a GC conversion down the line.

Will this mean Advance Wars on GC too? You'll have to watch this space and check Planet CVG over the coming months to get the scoop. But dear Lord, let it be so.





ON CUBE?

UESTORM

WISH YOU WERE HERE

Blue Storm drenches you in atmosphere from the moment the power's switched on, first seducing you with its tropical opening title screens. When you actually get into the game you're immersed in brilliantly realistic action that sees water splashing up onto the screen as you bounce across waves, overtake opponents and land huge jumps.

Everything about Wave Race on GC is slicker than its N64 predecessor (as you'd expect), from the vastly improved water physics and blinding visuals, to the overall sensation of speed and control. But sadly, in terms of gameplay, there have been no real changes made to the structure of the game, and with a total of only eight courses Blue Storm suffers in the longevity stakes.

However, the single-player Championship mode still offers a stern challenge for any racer, and the multiplayer is always a blast. Fans of the original might feel disappointed by the distinct lack of gameplay progression since the N64 version, but if you never experienced the original Wave Race, this is sure to impress.

7

The controls and water physics feel really natural

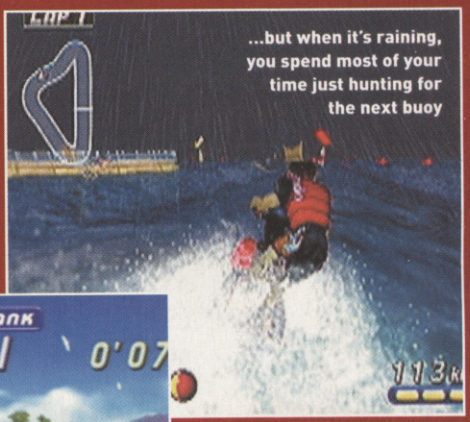
Every stunt adds a notch to your turbo gauge

Swim with dolphins – and whales on Arctic level

HARD RAIN

There may be only eight courses, but they've been spiced up with varying weather conditions that in turn affect the action.

For example, on a sunny day, your only real objective is staying ahead of the pack, while in contrast, when it's peeing it down on a stormy night, the waves are much bigger and your visibility is massively reduced because of the constant spray they create on the screen. As you can imagine, this makes it bloody difficult to see the buoys that you've got to weave between and races become much harder to win.



'RED HOT PREVIEWS' 'RED HOT PREVIEWS' 'RED HOT PREVIEWS'

PIKMIN

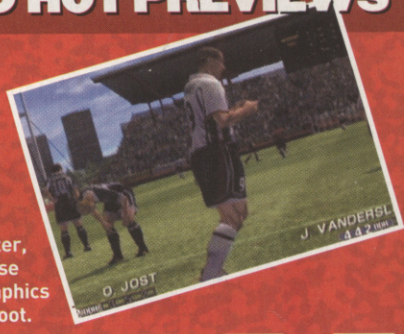
OUT: JUNE 14

Miyamoto's latest game steps away from focusing on one central character, putting you in control of a spaceman and hundreds of little alien flower people too. The thrill of commanding your troops to complete puzzles and recovering parts of your missing spaceship is bonkers but amazing.

VIRTUA STRIKER 3

OUT: WINTER 2002

With ISS and FIFA busy tussling for supremacy soon after launch, VS3 could blind-side both games and become GameCube's champion with its simple and stylish arcade action. Throwing tactics and intricate play into the gutter, Sega's striker provides a no-nonsense footie experience with beautiful graphics and wonderfully fluid controls to boot.



ESSENTIAL CVG ESSENTIAL

ROGUE LEADER: ROGUE SQUADRON II

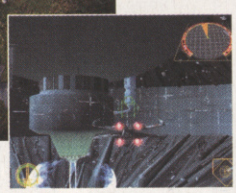
REVIEW

COST: £39.99
OUT: MAY 3
PLAYERS: 1
DEVELOPER: FACTOR 5/LUCASARTS
PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION

Star Wars is one of the only bits of sci-fi that you're allowed to get all geeky about without anyone batting an eyelid – because it's truly awesome! And unlike many of the Star Wars shambles that have rattled into the videogame arena in days gone by, Rogue Leader is a true testament to all that is great about the movies, even if the gameplay is a tad shallow.

Every battle looks as if it could have been pinched from the cutting room floor of George Lucas' editing suite, with scenes boasting overwhelmingly cinematic landscapes, amazingly realistic ships and stunningly action-packed dogfights.

Rogue Leader impressed Miyamoto a lot, and it's easy to see why



Once you get hands-on and experience the thrill of taking out AT-STs on Hoth, or flying through the claustrophobic Death Star trench with Vader breathing heavily down your neck, you won't need the power of The Force to tell you that this is something very special indeed.

8

You'll spend half your time gawping at the backgrounds

CVG'S CUBE CHECKLIST

LAUNCH TITLES

- HOT! Burnout
- Cel Damage
- Crazy Taxi
- Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2
- Driven
- HOT! 2002 FIFA World Cup
- The Simpsons Road Rage
- Legends Of Wrestling
- HOT! Luigi's Mansion
- NBA Street
- HOT! ISS 2
- Sonic Adventure 2: Battle
- Super Monkey Ball
- HOT! Star Wars Rogue Leader: Rogue Squadron 2
- Tarzan Freeride
- HOT! Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3
- Universal Studios
- Theme Park
- Wave Race: Blue Storm
- Worms Blast

LATE SPRING 2002

- Bloody Roar: Primal Fury
- James Bond 007 In... Agent Under Fire
- HOT! Pikmin
- Spy Hunter
- HOT! Spider-Man: The Movie
- Donald Duck: Quack Attack
- HOT! Super Smash Bros. Melee

SUMMER 2002

- Dark Summit
- Eggo Mania
- Eternal Darkness: HOT! Sanity's Requiem
- Evolution Worlds
- Gauntlet Dark Legacy
- NBA Courtside 2002
- NHL Hitz 2002
- Red Card Soccer
- SSX Tricky
- Top Gun: Combat Zones
- HOT! Turok Evolution

AUTUMN 2002

- Monsters, Inc.
- MX 2003
- HOT! Resident Evil
- Toxic Grind

WINTER 2002

- Defender
- Die Hard
- Dinotopia: The Timestone
- HOT! Donkey Kong Racing
- Freaky Flyers
- Pirates
- HOT! Mario Sunshine
- Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance
- HOT! Kameo: Elements of Power
- Phantasy Star Online Ver. 2
- Rayman M
- Robotech
- Scooby Doo: Night Of 100 Frights
- Sgt. Cruise
- Shrek
- HOT! Virtua Striker 3
- Warhammer 40,000

SPRING 2003

- Futurama
- Nightmare Creatures 3
- Rally Championship
- Tak And The Power Of JuJu

TBA

- HOT! 1080° Snowboarding 2
- 18 Wheeler
- HOT! Animal Forest
- Batman: Vengeance
- Bear In The Big Blue House
- HOT! Bomberman Generations
- Charlie's Angels
- Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon
- Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2
- Dragon's Lair 3D
- Duke Nukem Forever
- Galleon
- Jeremy McGrath Supercross World
- Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer
- HOT! Kirby Tilt 'N' Tumble
- Madden NFL 2002
- HOT! Mario Golf
- NFL Blitz 2002
- HOT! Metroid Prime
- Moto XXX
- HOT! Mario Tennis
- NFL Quarterback Club 2002
- HOT! Perfect Dark 2
- Race of Champions
- Raven Blade
- Ricochet Rick
- Stung!
- Tetris Worlds
- Vexx
- HOT! WWF Wrestlemania X8
- X-Men: Next Dimension
- XG3 Extreme Racing

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MEMORY CARDS

4MB (£9.99)
8MB (£14.99)
16MB (£19.99)

T PREVIEWS' 'RED HOT PREVIEWS'

DONKEY KONG RACING

OUT: WINTER 2002

In a land where gorillas ride around on rhinos and chimps sail about on swordfish, there's nothing at all normal about Donkey Kong Racing. What's more, this next gen effort is set to push Rare's manic racing series to new heights with its detailed courses and characters, hilarious race scenarios, and brilliantly vibrant in-game action.

Shigeru Miyamoto tells us how GameCube is going to invade your local arcade, and why Nintendo isn't just for kids...

CVG: Are you excited about the new Triforce arcade hardware and what possibilities do you feel it offers?

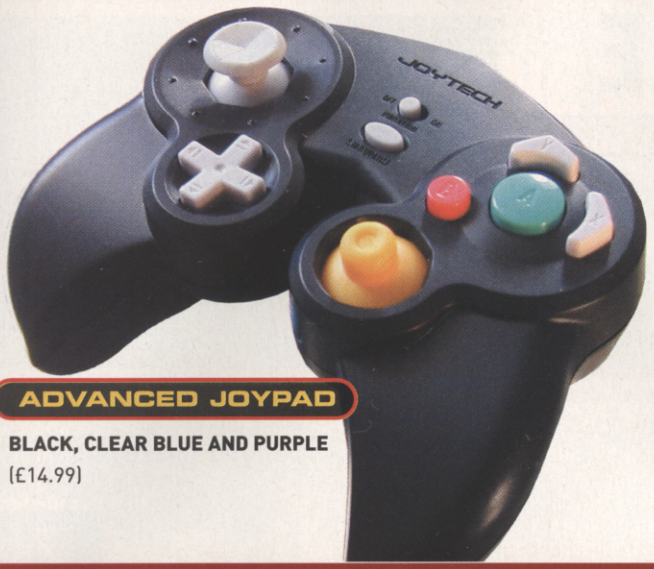
MIYAMOTO: I don't know to what extent I can talk about this, but just to start with a little about Triforce. Triforce is the name of a printed circuit-board for an arcade machine, a joint project between Nintendo, Namco, and our old arch enemy, Sega. Triforce is, of course, the name of an item in The Legend Of Zelda. The meaning of it is three forces coming together to become a big power. But the fact that three companies have made the announcement does not mean that other companies are not going to use the system: we believe that Capcom and other companies are going to make use of Triforce.

Sometime in March or April a series of announcements will be made, revealing several software titles that will make use of the hardware – you will be surprised by some of the names there. And arcade developer Sega is going to make a number of titles. As for the CPU and graphics chip in the GameCube, these are the ones actually used in the Triforce circuit board.

I think this signifies three important points. Firstly, from long experience of creating arcade games, Namco and Sega understood that the GameCube technology is good enough to make this type of game, and that it's easy and efficient enough to make their software. Its low cost has been taken into consideration. Another important point is that whatever software made for Triforce will be readily available for GameCube.

CVG: You've stressed you're trying to move away from the kiddy image, and

As well as the official gubbins, there'll be tons of other gear out there. Check out Joytech's line-up of goodies

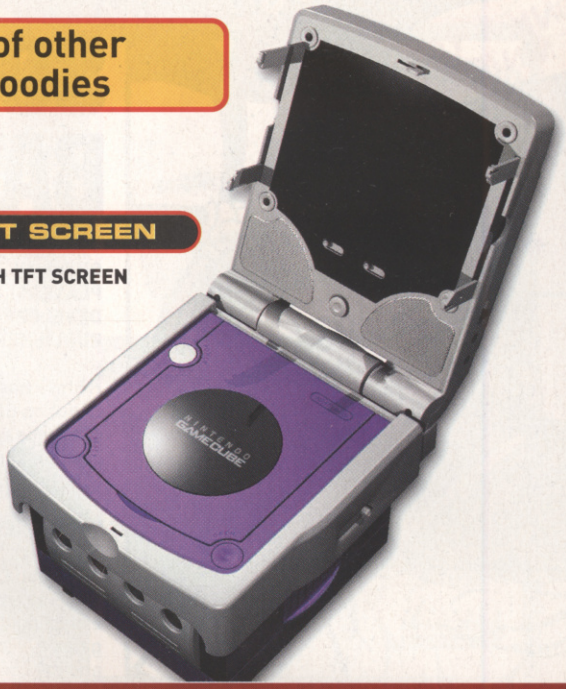


ADVANCED JOYPAD

BLACK, CLEAR BLUE AND PURPLE
(£14.99)

TFT SCREEN

5.6 INCH TFT SCREEN
(£99.99)



'RED HOT PREVIEWS' 'RED HOT PREVIEWS' 'RED HOT PREVIEWS'

STAR FOX ADVENTURES

OUT: SUMMER 2002

Shaping up to be one of Cube's biggest action adventures – you'll have seen on the video you got with the last issue of CVG how slick Star Fox Adventures is looking. Expect a massively action-heavy experience from SFA on Cube.

ANIMAL FOREST

OUT: TBA

Another game looking to capitalise on Nintendo's GC/GBA connectivity, this quirky adventure sees you befriending all sorts of woodland creatures, something the Japanese are going totally nuts for. CVG will be bringing you a full playtest soon. Until then, keep an open mind 'cos Animal Forest promises to be something very special.

MIYAMOTO LOOKS INTO THE FUTURE

that GameCube is for everybody. Now games with more mature content such as Res Evil and Eternal Darkness are due, what are you opinions on this?

MIYAMOTO: Whenever we are having talks with licensees, we make a point in asking them, "Please, you must make something suited for Nintendo." When we say we want to have something unique for Nintendo, they obviously misunderstand and think Nintendo want some childish-looking games. We are still having meetings with licensees, with companies such as Sega. They often say, "Yes, we wanted to make more adult-oriented games, [rather] than making characters look childish." I say, "Yeah, actually that's what we really wanted all the time."

From the point of view of first-party Nintendo licensees, Nintendo really has a responsibility to expand its hardware to much wider audiences. Even in Nintendo first-party titles we are trying to expand. So when I'm talking about what's unique about Nintendo, it's not childish software but rather things like the connectivity with the Game Boy Advance.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3

REVIEW

COST: £39.99
OUT: MAY 3
PLAYERS: 1-2
DEVELOPER: NEVERSOFT
PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION

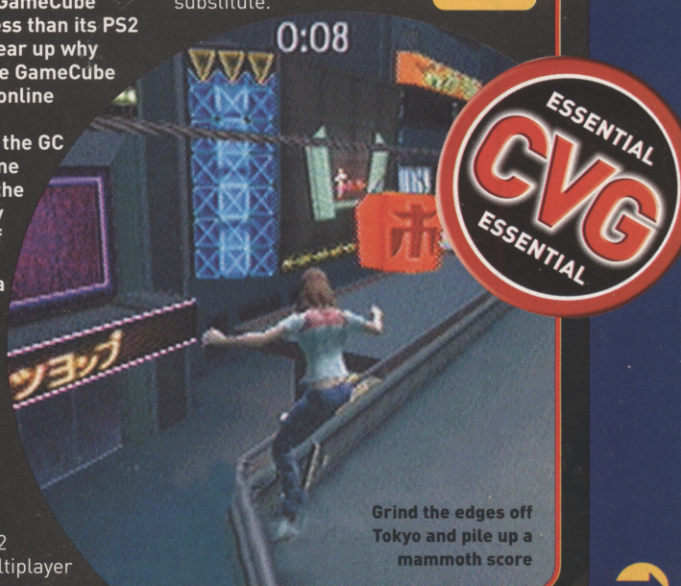
Straight off the bat you'll have noticed that Tony 3 on GameCube has scored one point less than its PS2 counterpart, so let's clear up why this is. The reasons: the GameCube pad and the lack of an online gaming facility.

Don't get us wrong, the GC pad is mint, but for some reason the position of the GC buttons and the tiny Dpad makes pulling off tricks and combos damn hard. Even with a lot of patience and perseverance it's just not possible to attain the kind of fluidity that the PS2 pad offers, which is a bit disappointing.

STILL BEAUTIFUL

Essentially this is an identical port of the PS2 game minus online multiplayer action, with the only real difference being that the blood in the Cube version looks a little pinker. So if you're a Hawk fan and don't own Sony's black beauty, this version is still an awesomely impressive substitute.

9



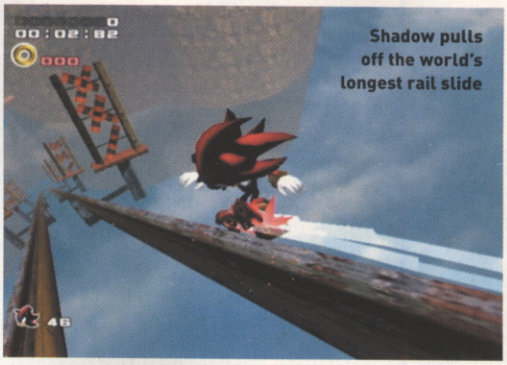
Grind the edges off Tokyo and pile up a mammoth score

SONIC ADVENTURE 2: BATTLE

REVIEW

COST: £39.99
OUT: MAY 3
PLAYERS: 1-2
DEVELOPER: SONIC/SEGA
PUBLISHER: INFOGRAMES

History has just been made: Sonic's debut on GC marks the blue bullet's first appearance on a Nintendo home console and the first use of the GC/GBA link-up facility.



WHAT'S NEW?

No matter how monumental these two events may sound, Sonic Adventure 2: Battle may come as a bit of a disappointment to anyone expecting drastic changes. Why? Well, the game is virtually identical to the DC version and the connectivity hardware has not been used very excitingly...

Once you've linked your two machines and popped a copy of Sonic Advance in your GBA, you'll be able to transfer the Chaos that you've trained up in SA2: Battle's Chao Garden onto your handheld, in order to compete in mini-games in the Tiny Chao Garden on GBA. But this is about as far as the connectivity hardware has been utilised. A wasted opportunity.

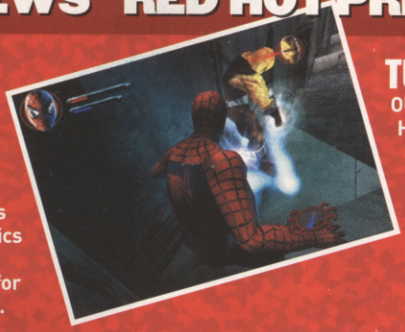
7

'RED HOT PREVIEWS' 'RED HOT PREVIEWS' 'RED HOT PREVIEWS'

SPIDER-MAN: THE MOVIE

OUT: JUNE 7

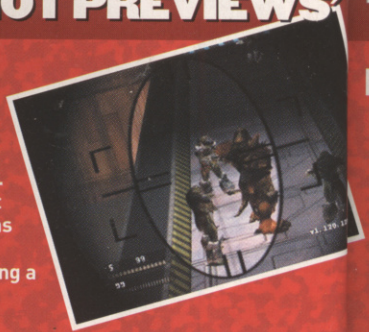
Games based on movies tend to be crap. Luckily this doesn't apply to the latest Spider-Man adventure, which is based on the solid gameplay mechanics of previous Spidey games. See CVG's preview of the PS2 game on page 30 for an idea of what to expect on Cube too.



TUROK EVOLUTION

OUT: SUMMER 2002

Hack down trees with heavy gunfire, blow up cliffs and fend off dinosaurs by crushing them under trees and rubble. Get in! There are loads of cool combat scenarios like this in Evolution, and as you'd expect, buckets of graphic violence too, whether you're pumping a reptile full of arrows, or sniping a creature from 500 yards. Class!



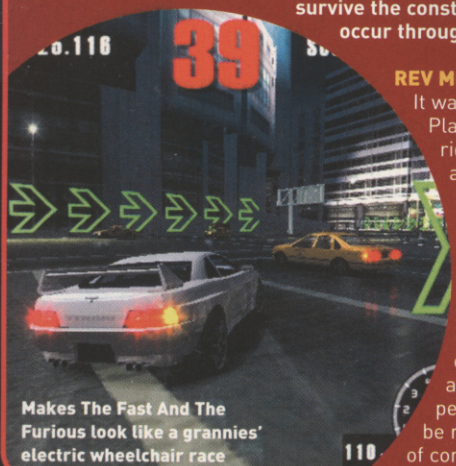
BURNOUT

ESSENTIAL CVG ESSENTIAL

REVIEW

COST: £39.99
OUT: MAY 3
PLAYERS: 1-2
DEVELOPER: CRITERION
PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM

Think Project Gotham meets Wreckless. Although you can't really see the character behind the wheel of your car, CVG is convinced that he's actually a crash test dummy, because no one human could possibly survive the constant write-off collisions that occur throughout Burnout.



Makes The Fast And The Furious look like a grannies' electric wheelchair race

REV ME UP

It was a storming success on PlayStation 2, as a result of its ridiculously quick highway race action, smooth arcade handling, and brutally brilliant pile-ups, and you can now expect the exact same insane experience on GameCube.

The Cube version is basically a super-crisp carbon copy that any adrenalin-seeking petrol-head should be racing to get hold of come May 3.

8

Feast your peepers on GameCube's classy UK packaging, and make sure you memorise what all the boxes look like, because come May 3 you'll have to storm into your local games shop the moment it opens, locate all the GC stuff that you want and snatch it off the shelves damn sharpish, as you can be sure that within a few minutes it'll all be gone.

I'LL HAVE THIS ONE, AND THIS ONE, AND THIS ONE...

- **Unless you like playing a game in one mammoth hardcore sitting, make sure you get hold of one of these immediately, because you can be sure that they'll sell out fast**
- **Create a solid bond between your Cube and GBA with the official link cable**

- **Official controllers will only be available in black and purple at launch**
- **This black beauty could soon be sitting under your telly!**

Although the Broadband and Modem Adaptors are ready to go, Nintendo is being very honest and realistic about when it thinks that GameCube will be going online. Of course, PlayStation 2 already offers an Internet gaming facility in the shape of Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3, but in his recent interview with CVG, Miyamoto highlighted some of the pitfalls of online gaming.

WATCH OUT: ONLINE HAZARD

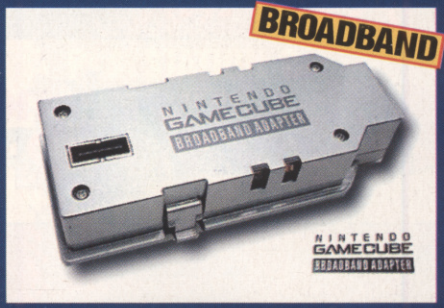
MYAMOTO: Putting a game online doesn't necessarily mean it will become any more interesting than it already is. I think there is a definite danger that combined network gaming can become a permanent escape from reality for the game developer. They become stuck with making new ideas, always thinking about making online games next time, so that the present offline games suffer.

Once you have made one single online networked game you can't easily go on to the next project. You have to keep watching the game's progress; in other words, you end up doing maintenance.

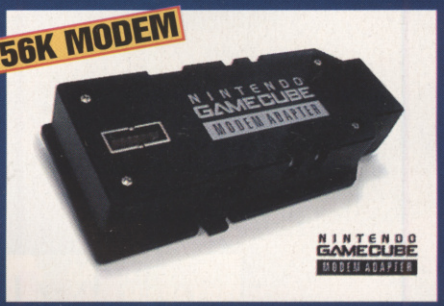
Also, as I said before, Nintendo cannot give a 100 per cent guarantee about the networking environment and we guess that by 2005 only around 20 per cent of European households will have access to broadband. Nintendo cannot afford to program for only 20 per cent of households when we have the possibility to sell to 100 per cent of them with non-networked games.

Also, we wish to provide a wide range of people with a variety of new entertainment, from small children to very old people. With online-networked games, that's just one type of person.

We are ready to go on to the online networks, but having said that, we do not believe that all future gaming will be played online.



Super-quick Broadband Adaptor



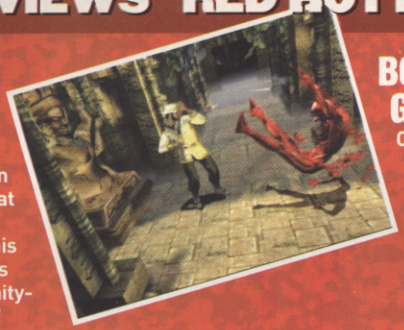
Bog-standard 56k Modem Adaptor

'RED HOT PREVIEWS' 'RED HOT PREVIEWS' 'RED HOT PREVIEWS'

ETERNAL DARKNESS

OUT: SUMMER 2002

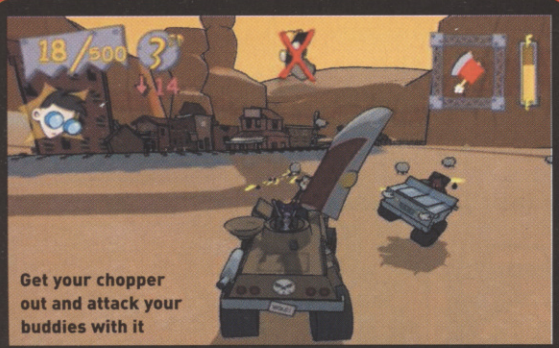
Promising to be darker than Satan's bum-crack, Eternal Darkness is the Cube's other main title, along with Resident Evil, that intends to broaden Nintendo's appeal to an older audience. This game screws with your head as you take on some hideous sanity-draining enemies. Watch out!



BOMBERMAN GENERATION

OUT: TBA

Like the GBA game, next gen Bomberman will have you questing your way through a massive bomb-dropping puzzle-based single-player adventure in some truly psychedelic and vibrant landscapes. No fan should be able to resist.



Get your chopper out and attack your buddies with it

CEL DAMAGE

REVIEW

COST: £39.99
OUT: MAY 3
PLAYERS: 1-4
DEVELOPER: EA
PUBLISHER: EA

When in doubt, cel-shade it! Fair enough, EA's exaggerated demolition derby boasts super-smooth, beautifully animated visuals, but this colourful exterior is basically just a veneer used to cover up some pretty unoriginal and uninspired gameplay. Multiplayer with mates is where the most fun is to be had, because the AI in the single-player games is very basic. So if you're up for a brainless and mildly amusing car crushing fun, Cel Damage is still worth a look.

6

PLAY CUBE EARLY

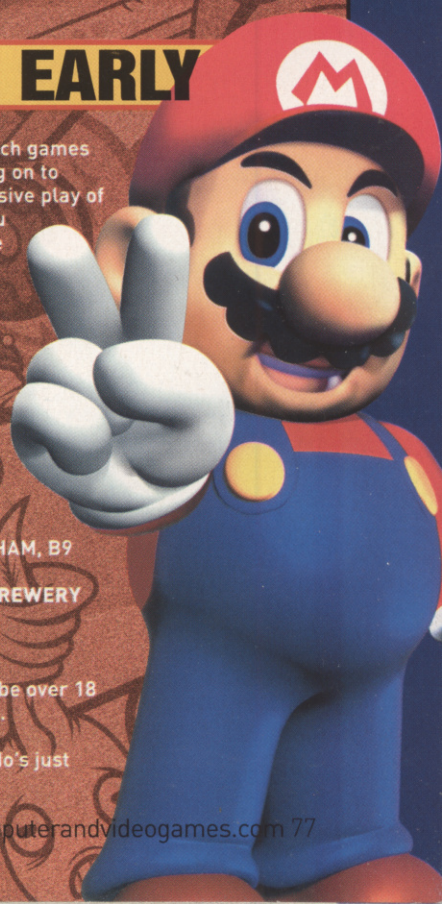
To get hands-on with all the UK launch games before they're released on May 3, log on to www.cubeclub.co.uk to win an exclusive play of Ninty's new machine. And even if you don't win, you'll be able to play Cube in all the main retailers in the week leading up to launch. The Cube Club tour is being organised by Nintendo and will take place on the following dates and in these places*:

BARROWLAND BALLROOM
244 GALLOWGATE, GLASGOW, G4
6-11PM, THURS 11 APRIL
INFINITY, PETER STREET, MANCHESTER M2
6-11PM, MON 15 AND TUE 16 APRIL
CODE, HEATH MILL LANE, BIRMINGHAM, B9
6-11PM, TUE 23 AND WED 24 APRIL
THE BOILERHOUSE, OLD TRUMAN BREWERY BRICK LANE, LONDON, E1
6-11PM, FRI 6 AND SAT 27 APRIL

CUBECLUB

*Note: You have to be over 18 years old to get in...

...who says Nintendo's just for kids?



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Reviews

Let the guiding light of CVG's reviews lead you to a better gaming future, brother

VIRTUA FIGHTER 4 80

BLOOD OMEN 2 94

STAR WARS RACER REVENGE 89

STAR WARS JEDI KNIGHT 2 90

2002 FIFA WORLD CUP 98

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WORMS BLAST	101
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EVERY CUBE LAUNCH GAME REVIEWED, STARTS PAGE 68!

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WHAT THE SCORES MEAN

1 – Argh, it stinks!
2 – Abysmal
3 – Sucks a fat one
4 – Pretty dire
5 – Very average
6 – Hmm, could be for you
7 – Pretty tasty
8 – Very good
9 – Essential
10 – An unmissable belter that defines the genre

CVG CLASSIC AWARD

The most coveted award a game can get. Only given to a true genre-definer. See this badge and buy the game.

Virtua Fighter 4

The connoisseur's fighting game shows Tekken who's boss

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **MAY 10**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **SEGA AM2**
PUBLISHER: **SONY**

Who can remember the last time there was such a tough choice to make between new PS2 games? Up till now, it's been pretty straightforward: if you want to drive nice cars, opt for GT3. To play football, go for Pro Evolution 2. As for fighting, easy – we're all waiting for Tekken 4, right? No, wait! Tekken's arch rival just bust down the door.

Virtua Fighter's latest upgrade is rapidly inflicting casualties. Tekkenites are deserting the arcade scene in droves, partly in dismay at the latest Tekken update, but mostly swayed by VF's new-found prowess. But remember, this is a hardcore crowd, gaming's answer to the Shaolin Monks. They welcome the kind of pain that could scare PS2 players back to Tekken, no matter how good it is. Well, whaddya gonna do?

THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES

So many people have waited so long for a Virtua Fighter game on PlayStation that there's over-excitement all around. CVG isn't going to get too hot under the collar, but will admit that Virtua Fighter 4 is doubtlessly great, and the most accessible game in the series.

We get a small selection of worthy extras in the home version, most notably an adaptation of the arcade version's ranking system and associated rewards. But before heading off to get stuck into the game, you can opt to create your own player: invent a funky name for him and choose a fighter you want to develop. It's not about building strength or learning new moves; it's purely to build your reputation.

NURTURE YOUR FIGHTER

Status is measured on the number of fights won or lost, and the ratio of recent wins. Your player is also graded in martial arts terms, from 'Kyu' to more formidable 'Dan' grades. However, you can only progress by laying it on the line in Kumite mode – where you come up against an endless succession of challengers of varying abilities. This is where VF4 comes into its own, with some terrifying displays of AI from the higher-ranking opponents. When you're up against a sixth Dan Lei-Fei with a high win ratio, you won't get by him on luck alone.

You're not aiming to 'clock' the game in Kumite mode; instead, the rewards you get are smaller and quirkier. Small presents are awarded, it seems, at random intervals. These are gifts for perseverance rather than skill.

Skill takes you one belt higher after success in a Ranking Match. Perseverance rewards you with, for example, goggles for Akira, shin guards for Lei-Fei, and a necklace for Pai-Chan. The longer you stick at Kumite, the more knick-knacks you acquire, which are used to customise your fighter. Some of the stuff you get is very odd, as you can see!

The clever AI in VF4 proves itself most convincingly in the AI training mode. Create an AI player in the same way as you create a standard player, then head to the dojo to teach the dummy your best moves. It's spooky: you perform a couple of basic moves and a combo, then the dummy repeats them straight after. It's not just the moves

Lei-Fei, dressed up in his spanking new gear and looking all the more impressive for it

CVG FACT

VF4 was originally developed for Sega's Naomi 2 arcade board, which is considerably more powerful than PS2

NOW GRANNY CAN PLAY

To make it easier from the start, new fighters Vanessa and Lei-Fei perform spectacularly with only simple commands. Returning characters also have a wider range of show-off moves, requiring little effort. Control is improved further with all side-stepping moves mapped onto the direction buttons, whereas in VF3 an extra button was called for. Basic movement is now closer to how Soul Calibur handles it. On balance, this means that anyone can have a great fight without claiming to be a grand master.

Pai-Chan, executing one of her new moves under the spotlight of a helicopter

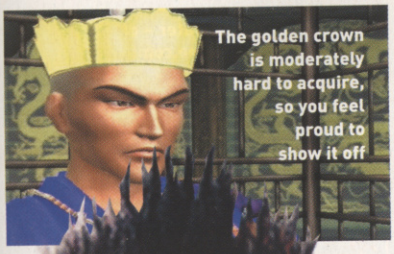
Looking into your opponent's eyes after a defeat is chilling

Lau's gonna need ice to numb the pain after this beating in the snow

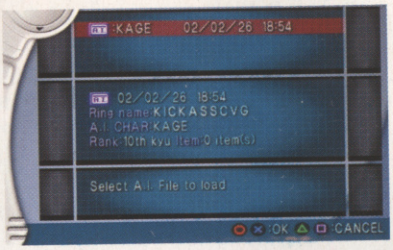
Having sand kicked in your face is so humiliating, eh Lion?

Leaves are whipped into a vortex by Jeffry and Jacky's furious bout

Hard-hitting moves make waves in this stage, as Lau discovers to his joy

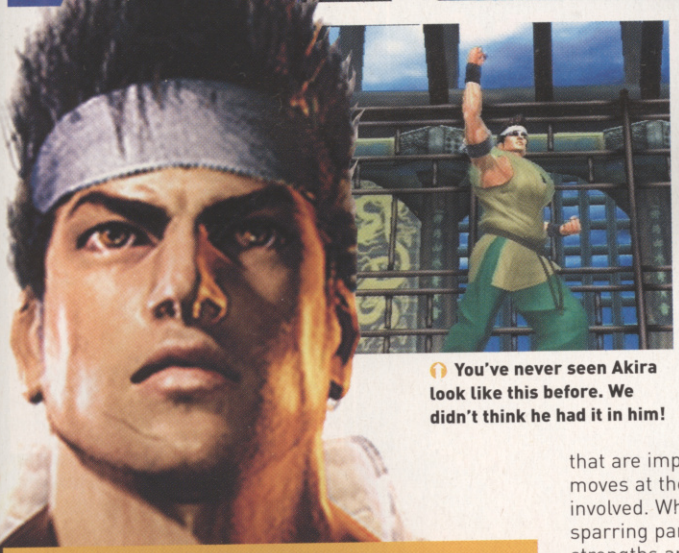


The golden crown is moderately hard to acquire, so you feel proud to show it off

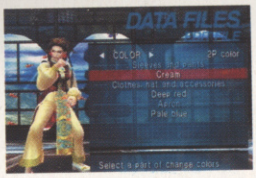


The birth certificate – or should that be death warrant...

Your AI student repays you for his training



You've never seen Akira look like this before. We didn't think he had it in him!



Here's where you customise your fighter

can add to the training by saying 'yes' to good moves by pressing the circle button, and 'no' to bad moves, using the cross button – and it's mighty good fun to mess around with.

IS THIS IT?

When Virtua Fighter 3 hit in 1996, it was undoubtedly an all-round gobsmacking event. The technology was unparalleled, as were the innovative ideas, such as dodging and undulating arenas. Now it seems that VF4 has bowed down to certain standards that have become accepted in 3D fighting, in some ways taking steps backwards. But as a steadfast contender in the arcades there's no questioning VF4's authority.

This PlayStation 2 conversion is a no-frills offering, in contrast to home versions of Tekken. Dedicated fighting fans certainly shouldn't let it pass, but if you're less serious about the genre, VF4 isn't the showcase PS2 title some claim it to be.

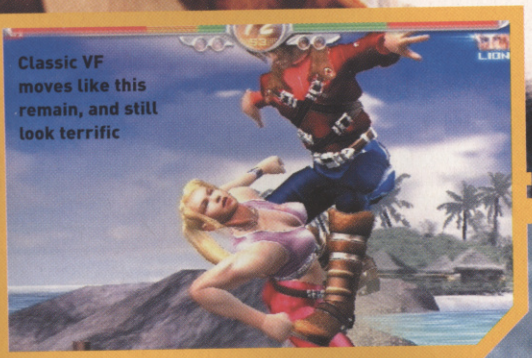
CVG RECKONS

No fireworks here. A decent performance requires dedication and hard work. Paul

8

If you like this try this...
Tekken Tag Tournament (PS2)

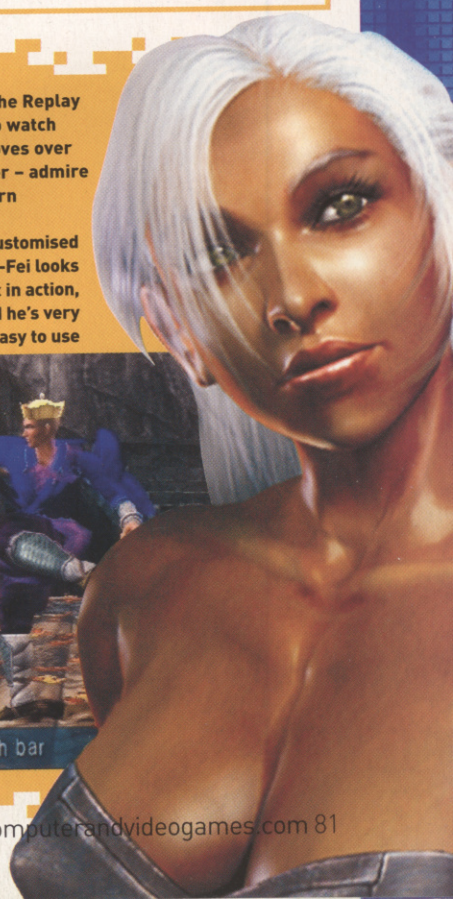
that are important, but the choice of moves at the right time and the timing involved. What you're doing is creating a sparring partner which reflects your strengths and weaknesses. You can also enter your protege in the Kumite tournament, to see how he or she fares. During the battles you



Classic VF moves like this remain, and still look terrific

Use the Replay Mode to watch cool moves over and over – admire and learn

Our customised Lei-Fei looks terrific in action, and he's very easy to use



THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS

The action in Dungeon Siege is relentless. Outside of the towns, you'll rarely travel more than a few yards without running into hordes of monstrosities. If you're to get anywhere in your quest to uncover why the evil Krug are invading the lands around Stonebridge and how the Grand Mage Merik is connected, you'll have to learn how to fight as a well-balanced party, with casters, archers and fighters, and sharpish.

Adjust your formation to suit the terrain...

...just don't let individuals run ahead too far or they'll be surrounded and cut to pieces

Mix 'n' match skills so your party can switch tactics to suit the situation

Hit pause if it's getting too confusing

Dungeon Siege

If she was a Bond girl, she'd be Pussy Galore...

COST: **£34.99**
OUT: **APRIL 19**
PLAYERS: **1-8**
DEVELOPER: **GAS POWERED GAMES**
PUBLISHER: **MICROSOFT**

Dungeons aren't scary. Fine-carved stonework and original features, they just need a lick of paint from make-over king Lawrence Llewelyn Bowen. But since the coiffured clown doesn't do games, here's Microsoft's belated make-over of all things dungeony instead.

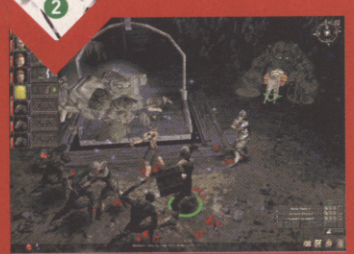
Symbols like this appear overhead when someone levels up

Melee fighters to the front, casters and ranged to the rear. Good plan

MULE COOL

The pack mules carry loads of gear – our five-strong party of hardy adventurers loaded three mules with valuable loot in no time. Handy.

The essential principle: more mules = more loot = more gold from trading



Mules even defend themselves. Er, that's illegal isn't it, Mr Stonemonster?

Sitting somewhere between the real-time action frenzy of the Diablo school and the pause-every-second party combat of Baldur's Gate, Dungeon Siege does away with much of the traditional role-playing stat-crunching. It looks so slick that even several hours in you'll still be admiring the lush environments, fantastic looking enemies and cool fight scenes.

CVG FACT

Gas Powered Games is releasing a Siege editor you can download for free, to let you build your own world

GRIZZLY FUROKS TO YOU

The backbone of any role-player is the levelling up system, and DS keeps it simple, assigning points to abilities such as dexterity and skills like magic, according to how you play. So, use a sword a lot, and your hand-to-hand fighting will improve.

With only four types of skill, this makes character development feel very natural, uncomplicated and flexible. Need a change of tactics? Just assign someone to use, say, bows and he'll improve his ranged skills. And the terminally stat-inclined still get to pore over weapon stats and spell effects if they so desire.

This is typical of the game's whole approach: keep it user-friendly and logical. Managing your party's inventories, looting corpses or switching weapons and tactics mid-battle are a piece of cake. We also loved touches like your heroes being knocked out before dying, giving you a chance to save them.

DS tries to ensure nothing too taxing gets between you and enjoying this massive, action-packed dungeon crawl. And while it might not be Final Fantasy in terms of plot, theres's enough here to keep you motivated.

If DS was a Bond girl, she'd be Pussy Galore: not the most original, but sexy, fast, and definitely memorable.

CVG RECKONS

Great looking, easy to get into and rewarding if you invest the time, though like most role-players its somewhat repetitive. **Pete**

8

If you like this try these...
Throne Of Darkness (PC), Lodoss War (DC)

Gitaroo Man

This fret board frenzy shows up even the mighty Parappa

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-4**
DEVELOPER: **KOEI**
PUBLISHER: **THQ**

There was a time when us goons at CVG were moaning about the lack of mad Japanese games arriving on our fair shores. And now look: we've got a rapping dog in Parappa 2, dancing aliens in Space Channel 5.1 and a pervy paparazzo in Polaroid Pete. We may have helped create a monster.

Next in line in the PS2 Carnival of Crazy is Gitaroo Man. The game is rhythm action with a neat twist: as well as hammering buttons that appear, you also have to use the left analog stick to mimic the guitar twang by following the line that pops up on screen. The story may be nonsensical, but that doesn't matter as you'll be marvelling at the fantastic visuals and genuinely enjoyable tunes you jam to.

BON JOVI DOES LA BAMBA

The battle is split into distinct parts. You start with the charge section where you rev up your guitar with pop power, then unleash it in the Battle section. Levels, which consist of encounters with another (usually hostile) character, often bounce back and forth between Charge and Battle and, happily, they last ages.

The ten levels are truly challenging and once busted you unlock an even tougher Master mode. But the real longevity lies in the awesome multiplayer game, where up to four players can jam off together in what is the ultimate musical battle royale. Music to our ears.

U-1 and his faithful hound Puma seem mighty pleased with themselves

These guys play samba tunes on their own ribs. Quite a skill

CVG RECKONS

Much better value than recent rhythm games, with a multiplayer mode that really helps ice this fruitiest of cakes. Lee

8

If you like this try this...
Parappa The Rapper 2 (PS2)

SAVE THE WORLD IN TEN STEPS

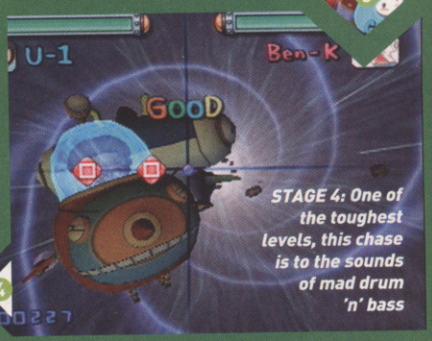
There are ten levels in Gitaroo Man and each offers a different enemy to battle and a different style of music to play your licks to. Your hero U-1 even gets a little romantic action on his quest to save the world. Check out the incredible musical journey ahead in our ten-step guide to sonic salvation!

STAGE 1: An easy soft-rock intro to the game in a compartment in U-1's bedroom cupboard

STAGE 2: Friendly techno J-pop accompanies this mad UFO invasion and subsequent rooftop chase

STAGE 3: Strum along to slow funk and disco beats in the swamps and break this King's mojo

STAGE 4: One of the toughest levels, this chase is to the sounds of mad drum 'n' bass



STAGE 5: Reggae and ragga sound good when you're walking on the moon

STAGE 6: Woo the beautiful Kirah with your acoustic folk guitar skills

STAGE 7: Samba with the skeletons and rescue the imprisoned Puma

STAGE 8: Gregorio III is a reject from Phantom Of The Opera

STAGE 9: Join forces with Kirah for a stadium rock extravaganza

STAGE 10: The last level out-thrashes even the best axe maniacs

The power and the gory.

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Wizards of the Coast

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COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **SONY**
PUBLISHER: **EIDOS**

You exist only to torture others. You annoy and aggravate in equal measure and you have the ability to cause a riot of angry flailing fists in any room you dare show your face. No, you're not Pop Idols' Simon Cowell, you're a mosquito and for the first time, you have a starring role in a videogame.

WHAT'S YAMADA WITH YOU?

The game is set inside the Yamada family's house. Each level is set in a different room and you have to suck the required amount of blood from the family to progress to the next stage. What's so cool is that you often have to interact with the environment to get your prey to expose their biteable bits.

YOU SUCK! BIG STYLE

Each family member has a spot that's sweet for sucking. Once it's exposed you fly in close, land, and then puncture the skin. After that it's a race against time to rotate the right analog stick in a steady rhythm to suck as much blood as possible before your prey gets too itchy.

Follow the square target to lock on to the poor lady's heel and ready your pointy proboscis...

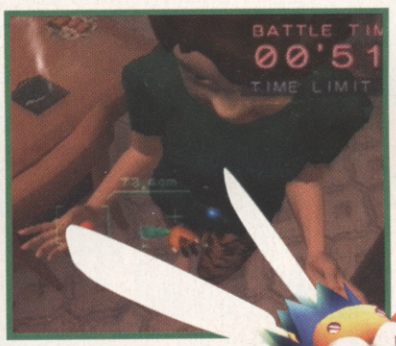
...then keep the ball in the left bar in the blue area to suck as much blood as you possibly can

Mr Moskeeto

An original gem that gets right under your skin – for a while

Fly into a light switch to flick off the light and pretty young Rena will get up to turn it back on. Bash the TV remote and Mr Yamada will grumble and shift position to change the channel back. It's crazy, brilliant fun, and reminds you why games are cool. The big problem? It's a bit of a one-trick pony and when the novelty wears off you might feel a little skanked.

Is that stigmata or a pressure point?



CVG RECKONS

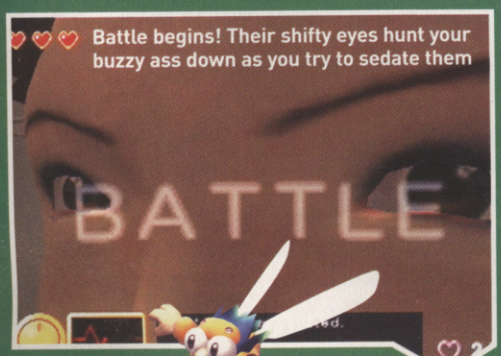
Fresh and fun but what bugs us is the lack of longevity for your forty quid. What are we? Suckers? **Lee**

6

If you like this try these...
Toy Commander (DC)

FRANKIE SAYS...

When stealthy blood-sucking fails and you alert a family member to your presence, Battle mode begins. You have to locate and fly into all of your attacker's pressure points to help him relax and forget what was bothering him. It's mad, but good.



Battle begins! Their shifty eyes hunt your buzzy ass down as you try to sedate them

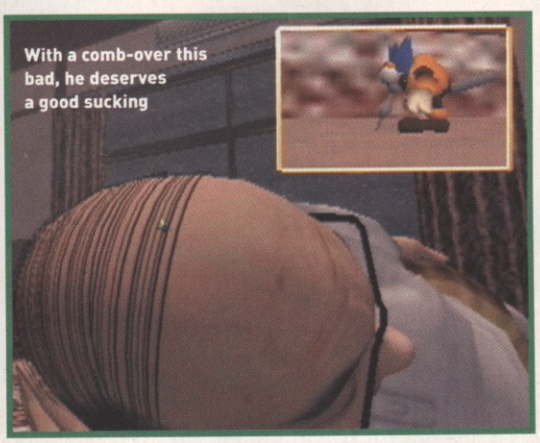
Fly into their red pressure points to help the Yamadas chill

Turn on the answer machine to worry and confuse the residents

Avoid the purple clouds of bug spray or perish

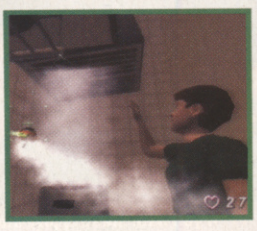
CVG FACT

Mr Moskeeto and Mad Maestro! (page 96) are both part of Eidos's 'Fresh' range of offbeat Japanese games. Both great fun, but too pricey, we reckon.



With a comb-over this bad, he deserves a good sucking

Just watching the mad Yamadas doing their thing is top fun too



Deus Ex

Paranoia-powered PC game sighted near PS2. It's a conspiracy!

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **APRIL**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **ION STORM**
PUBLISHER: **EIDOS INTERACTIVE**

CVG FACT

Deus Ex is Latin for 'from God'. The game is littered with Biblical references – even the main character. Does 'JC' equal Jesus Christ?

JC Denton is a cybernetic warrior. As a special agent for UNATCO (United Nations Anti-Terrorist Coalition), his mission is to track down and eliminate NSF (National Secessionist Front) terrorists, who are trying to disrupt supplies of the vital medicine Ambrosia. Or at least, that's what JC thinks. In fact Deus Ex is more than a first-person shooter, it's an action-packed adventure full of RPG-style twists and turns. The way you play the game influences the story, so you'll have to think as much as you shoot.

SILENT BUT VIOLENT

The game starts out in New York, in the debris of the ruined Statue of Liberty. Each level lets you play the way you want: either sneak about, sniping goons from miles away or knocking them out with a tazer charge, or wade in and take 'em down with an assault rifle. Just like in Metal Gear Solid, guards will notice if one of their mates suddenly collapses with a tranquilliser dart in their ass, so be careful.

Completing tasks within each mission earns you skill points, which can be spent on improving your weapons handling, hacking, swimming and other useful skills. You'll also collect nanotech augmentation canisters, which upgrade JC into even more of a hi-tech badass. Become a bullet-proof super soldier, or an agile, computer-savvy sniper, depending on the upgrades you pick.

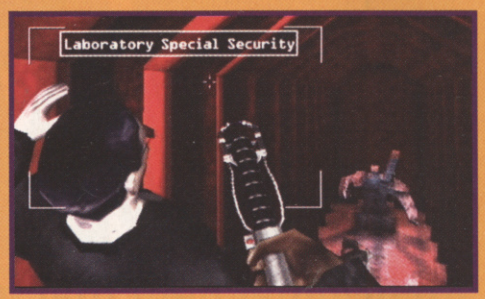
Deus Ex is a PC conversion, but the original developer made sure that its ideas remained intact. So the complex on-screen interface has been expertly redesigned to look better on a TV screen, and they've made an effort to properly translate the control system to the PS2's Dual Shock controller.

The atmosphere is tense and JC's nightmarish future world draws you right in. It's nothing like as slick and well presented as MGS2, but it provides a suitably intelligent back-up if you've finished Snake's new masterpiece already.

CUNNING LIKE A FOX

If you so choose, a large part of Deus Ex can be played sneaking about in the shadows, using futuristic gadgets and finely honed stealth techniques to avoid contact with enemies.

Use Multitools to disable electronic locks and security cameras. This will leave your way clear for some uninterrupted sneakery



Zapping enemies with a tazer knocks them out, so they might wake up to hassle you again. But then again, certain characters may prove useful later...

KILLING SPREE

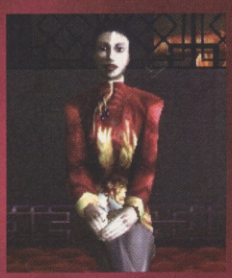
As you upgrade JC's Denton's abilities, the kinds of threats he has to deal with grow increasingly tough too. Terrorists might be crazy and ready to kill, but counter-terrorism forces are even more psycho...

MJ12 troops are ultra-hardcore, so get plenty of armour upgrades before you tangle with them

Take care of regular terrorists with gas grenades or a sneaky bullet to the head

But for the ultimate in JC-toasting, try taking on a military spider-bot with just an assault rifle. Eep!

The assault rifle is nothing like subtle, but it gets the job done



Expect this lady to be in on the conspiracy

If you hate stealth, just blow stuff up

The terrorist dance team react badly to being shot

CVG RECKONS

Drab-looking but brilliantly crafted thriller that will suit both action and stealth fans. **Steve F**

8

If you like this try this...
Metal Gear Solid 2 (PS2), Thief 2: The Dark Age (PC)

Sled Storm

This month's Tricky-a-like winner is...

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **EA**
PUBLISHER: **EA**

From its use of the same red track markings and video screens, to the boost gauge, super-extreme tracks, and 'zany' characters, it won't take you long to catch on to the fact that Sled Storm is basically SSX Tricky on a snow mobile.

FIRE AND ICE ARE NICE

Nail a couple of stupidly unrealistic stunts and your turbo bar fills up, then hit the boost button to propel yourself like a human firework into the gob of a 300ft fish sculpture. There are weird obstacles, nifty short cuts, insanely steep inclines, and ramps scattered throughout each of the seven themed courses, and the sensations of speed and intensity are well on a par with those in EA's SSX games.

However, the stunt element isn't nearly on the same level: there's a painful delay before every trick kicks in, resulting in you bailing in the most undeserved situations, and thus forcing you to bury your joypad in your little brother's head in an act of wild frustration. But if you caned both SSX titles into the ground and are looking for a variation on what is basically the same game, this could be right up your half-pipe.

No, you're not about to die – it's a stunt

You need to first charge up your 'Storm' gauge. Then you can let rip massively and hit mad speeds!

It was a red-hot vindaloo

Nail the harder stunts

Find shortcuts on every track

CVG RECKONS

Original it ain't! But as a simple, maniacally twisty and super-fast arcade racer, it doesn't disappoint. **Mike**

7

If you like this try these...
SSX Tricky (PS2), ATV Offroad Fury (PS2)

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **YUKE'S**
PUBLISHER: **EIDOS**

It's not every day your girlfriend's soul gets sucked out of her body and implanted into a big stick. Nor that you then use this spiritual stick as a means of rescuing her. But such is the world of generic sci-fi videogame plots. We can put up with weak ideas if they're backing up interesting and imaginative gameplay, but EOE's action is neither, appearing ludicrous from the start.

Josh's weapons make noises like lightsabers

Bad guys are a bit thick and may wait to be attacked

EOE: Eve Of Extinction

Sure to go the way of the Dodo

Josh is a bit tasty with a stick

Lock on and slash away!

SOGGY BOTTOM

Despite an impressive range of weapons that level up and gain more power as you fight, combat involves little more than hammering buttons until your foe falls over. The environments are large and the puzzles you have to solve are at least challenging, but there's nothing new here.

Controlling your hero feels jerky and soggy, and the buttons never respond quite the way you want them to. You'll be constantly tugging the camera along behind you too. It's not entirely awful, just too flawed to be more than average.

CVG RECKONS

Some good ideas, but they're eclipsed by the awful camera and awkward, unresponsive controls. **Lee**

5

If you like this try this...
The Bouncer (PS2)

RIP UP THE STREETS.
RUB OUT THE MOB.
Face off with the Yazuka mafia, pulling off 20 tough, high-speed driving missions through the streets of a fully interactive city. Unleash damage in one of 14 vehicles - from sports cars to a monster truck. Then sit back and relive the action in stunning replays.
BIG UP THE ACTION with the LOTUS PRO RACER
WRECKLESS
The Yakuza Missions™
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Star Wars: Racer Revenge

Luke warm racing action. Geddit?

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **RAINBOW STUDIOS/ LUCASARTS**
PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**

Travelling from 0 to 600mph in two seconds should create enough G-force to rip the hair out of your head. But although the action in Racer Revenge is quick, the sensation of blistering raw speed simply isn't here. No real innovative gameplay touches have been thrown into this shabby sequel, so if you were expecting something radical from this PS2 version, you might find your lightsaber goes limp.

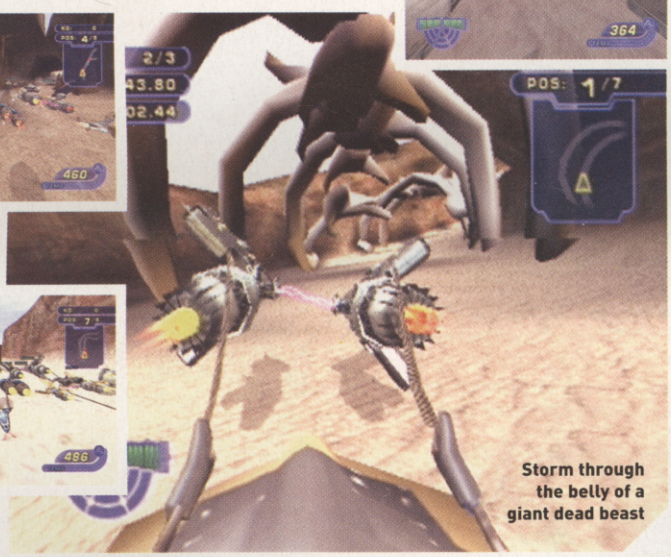
The two-player: basic but fun for a while

Use the boost wisely or you'll explode

Cockpit view is the most cinematic

Pod-on-pod action gets nasty

Smack into enemies to inflict damage



Storm through the belly of a giant dead beast

GUESS WHICH WAY?

It's not always clear where you should be going, so when you start out it's a case of using some serious guesswork to negotiate your way around.

The forest track is bloody dark in places, so be prepared to write off your pod on your first couple of tries

Left or right? Place your bets now! Betting ends

SLIPROADS AND SHORTCUTS

Keep your peepers peeled for any shortcuts so you can steam ahead and nail a super-speedy time. Sometimes they're freakin' obvious, though.

Er, guess where...

As in the old N64 game, there are tons of ways to tear around each course due to the various routes and shortcuts. It's worth learning the layout of the tracks to get the best racing experience and to notch up the fastest times possible, as you don't have time to take your eyes off the track to look at the map. Plus, there are hardly any track markers, so unless you dedicate a bit of time to memorising courses, you'll be smacking headfirst into walls and spending half your time picking podracer wreckage out of your face.

I HAVE YOU NOW

Problem is, once you've learnt the basic layouts of each level, winning races and completing the game is a doddle: even the most basic unmodified pod handles every corner with ease and the AI of your opponents is pretty basic. And, with no additional difficulty settings, Racer Revenge's lifespan is shorter than that of your average housefly. Admittedly, the in-game action is fast and super-smooth, but that's not enough to make you want to keep coming back for more.

So is it worth shelling out 40 nicker for? Yes, if you're a Star Wars nut or a diehard fan of the original podracer on N64, because you get 13 new tracks, slick visuals and characters from Episode II. Otherwise, probably not.

CVG FACT

Rainbow Studios is behind Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2, mint racer ATV Offroad Fury and watery winner Splashdown

CVG RECKONS

Lacking intensity and longevity, this nippy racer is only really likely to appeal to Star Wars geeks. **Mike**

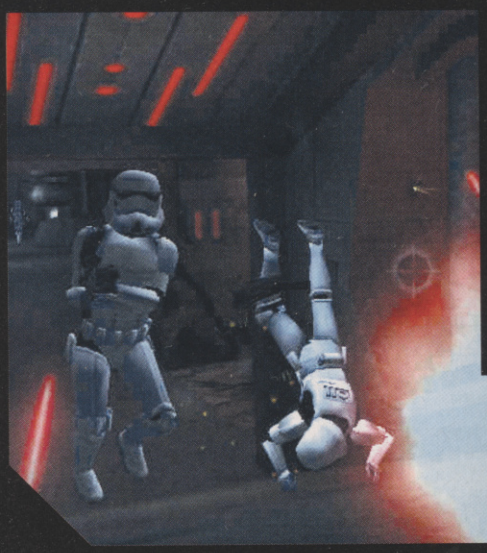
6

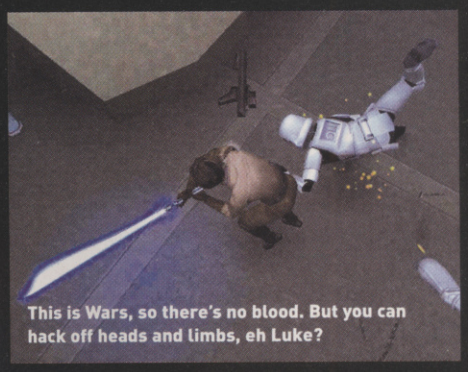
If you like this try these...
Wipeout Fusion (PS2), Extreme G-3 (PS2)

Star Wars Jedi Knight II: Jedi Outcast

Close as you'll get to being a Jedi outside of a nut house. "Spast!"

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-16**
DEVELOPER: **LUCASARTS**
PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**





This is Wars, so there's no blood. But you can hack off heads and limbs, eh Luke?

Ever wondered what happens after the end credits roll in Return Of The Jedi? Does Skywalker come out of the closet or will Princess Leia get a kinky thing about Hutts and ditch Solo? Film god George Lucas will probably never make what would chronologically be the last three movies in the series, but that hasn't stopped developer LucasArts from expanding the Wars universe.

Jedi Outcast, the latest epic in the class PC Jedi Knight series, returns you to the Wars universe as lapsed Jedi-turned-mercenary Kyle Katarn, to get bossed around by Mon Mothma and duel Dark Side Jedis alongside Skywalker. And, after many hours of struggling with The Force, CVG can confirm that post-Empire Strikes Back Jedis say "Spast" when they swear, Luke's bowl barnet is as scary as ever and Mothma is no less po-faced even after The Emperor goes spacewalking without a suit. But we still have no idea what their final fates will be.

So you'll just have to content yourselves with the knowledge that Jedi Outcast takes you on one hell of an adventure in true Wars style.

Arse over tit: cinematic death animations!

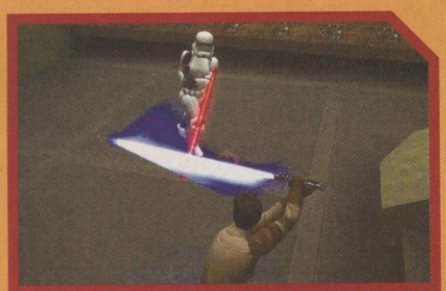
SPASTING HELL

Like a true Jedi, Outcast plays mind tricks with you. The opening mission, which involves investigating a suspicious transmission from an abandoned Imperial base on Kejim, feels much like any other corridor shooter, only it's set in the Wars universe. Flick switches, solve simple puzzles to access new areas and tear up scores of Stormtroopers with an E-11 blaster and a Wookiee Bowcaster.

Then, just as you're starting to feel a bit disappointed, the plot (Imperial left-overs The Remnant are threatening the New Republic) throws you into a series of puzzles in a ruined temple near the Jedi Academy. There you learn how to use Kyle's re-acquired Jedi powers, and it's no coincidence that the game transforms as soon as you get your hands on The Force and a lightsaber. Not just because the default view throws you from first- to third-person every time you fire up your 'saber, or because now you can

JEDI OR NOT, HERE WE COME

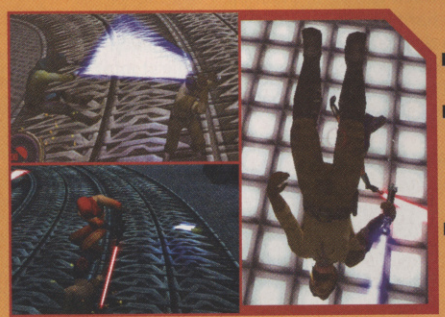
As games like Jedi Power Battles proved, just because you get to wield a lightsaber doesn't guarantee you'll feel like a Jedi. Thankfully though, you do in Outcast. Check out these moves...



A basic Jedi skill: you can deflect laser bolts

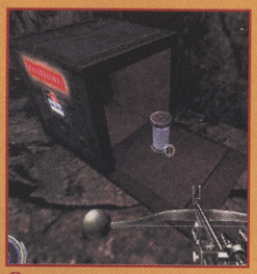
Run along walls – dodge that flying lightsaber!

All choked up: Force Grip isn't just for cutscenes



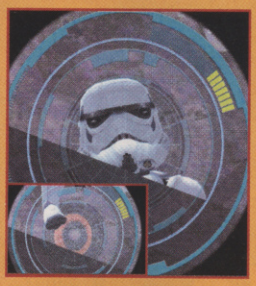
You're not the only one with the cool Jedi moves

You may find the trickier jumps easier in third-person



Pick up keys to unlock goodie chests, or keep an eye open for secret areas

The Disruptor Rifle's zoom is spasting fantastic

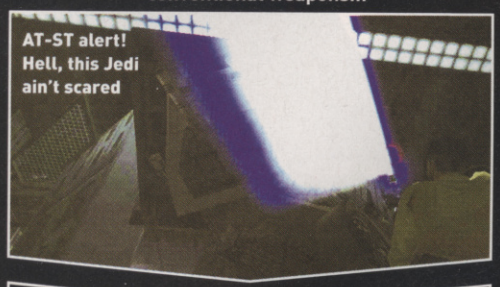


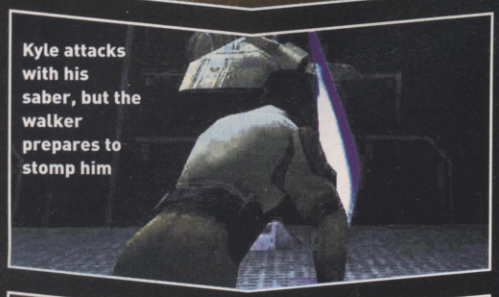
Force Push those tiles: the puzzles early on in the game aren't all that taxing

Looks tempting, but wrong Wars game, chap

JEDI THINK YOU'RE DEAD

A wise Jedi knows when to resort to more conventional weapons...





Urgh. Katarn's made into street pizza by the AT-ST. Fool should've used a Thermal Detonator

move objects with the power of your mind – though this certainly adds new challenges to missions.

No, the way you play the game changes. Suddenly you're ignoring your fully-armed guns and sneaky trip wires to run like a loon into rooms packed with enemies, somersaulting overhead, deflecting laser bolts, slashing off limbs and cutting Troopers in half with your satisfying 'saber throw move.

CHILL OUT, JEDI

Indeed, the array of lightsaber attacks at your disposal is more like something out of a console fighter than a PC shooter. Even better, your 'saber skills improve as you progress.

Add this to other evolving Force powers and you're soon running up walls Matrix style, leaping across impossible drops and combining physical blows with Force Grip and Lightning attacks. You feel damn near invincible. You can feel The Force. You ARE a Jedi. And then you try to take down an AT-ST using just your lightsaber. Oops.

Needless to say, you soon acquire a little Jedi wisdom too. There's a time for hand-to-hand heroics, and there's a time for Imperial Heavy Repeaters. You'll need to adjust your tactics accordingly – Dark Jedis have similar projectile-deflecting powers to you, so go at it beat 'em up style, but you'll kiss your Tenloss Disruptor Rifle's zoom when it comes to picking off snipers. Again, you'll also need first-person view for shooting sections, but precision-jumping across skyscrapers may be easier in third-person.

It's this continual switch from almost platform-style exploration and block-moving-style puzzling, to corridor shooting, stealthy sniping, and fighter-style combat that keeps Jedi Outcast feeling fresh and suitably, well, epic.

We could rave on for ages about some (mostly) inspired level design: how the glow of your lightsaber reflects off objects, how ammo and power-up amounts are just right, or how cool it is to be adventuring in classic Wars scenarios like Cloud City.

But Outcast has its Dark side too, manifesting itself most notably in the frustration you experience when having to grid-search levels for that flat switch you overlooked or box you didn't Force Pull to open a new area. Then there's the way you now automatically get assigned Force powers, with Dark Side powers like Rage only available in multiplayer.

Hopefully they'll have ironed out some AI twitches for release too, but the main point is this: while it's hardly a vastly different gaming experience from earlier instalments in the series, Outcast feels like an adventure fit for a Jedi. As your character draws closer to The Force, you get drawn further into the game, the plot and the Wars universe. And what more could you ask than that from a game called Jedi Knight?

CVG RECKONS

Makes you feel like a Jedi. Not perfect but one of the best Wars games out there all the same. **Pete**

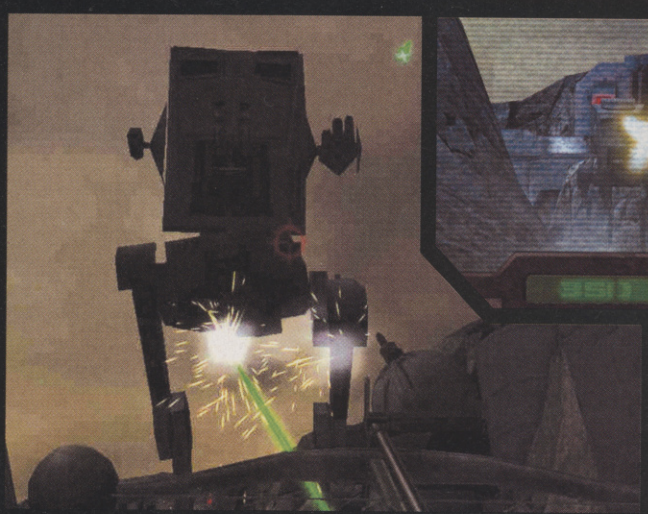
8

If you like this try this...
JK: Dark Forces II (PC)

Cut to bits, but at least you look cool dying in slo-mo

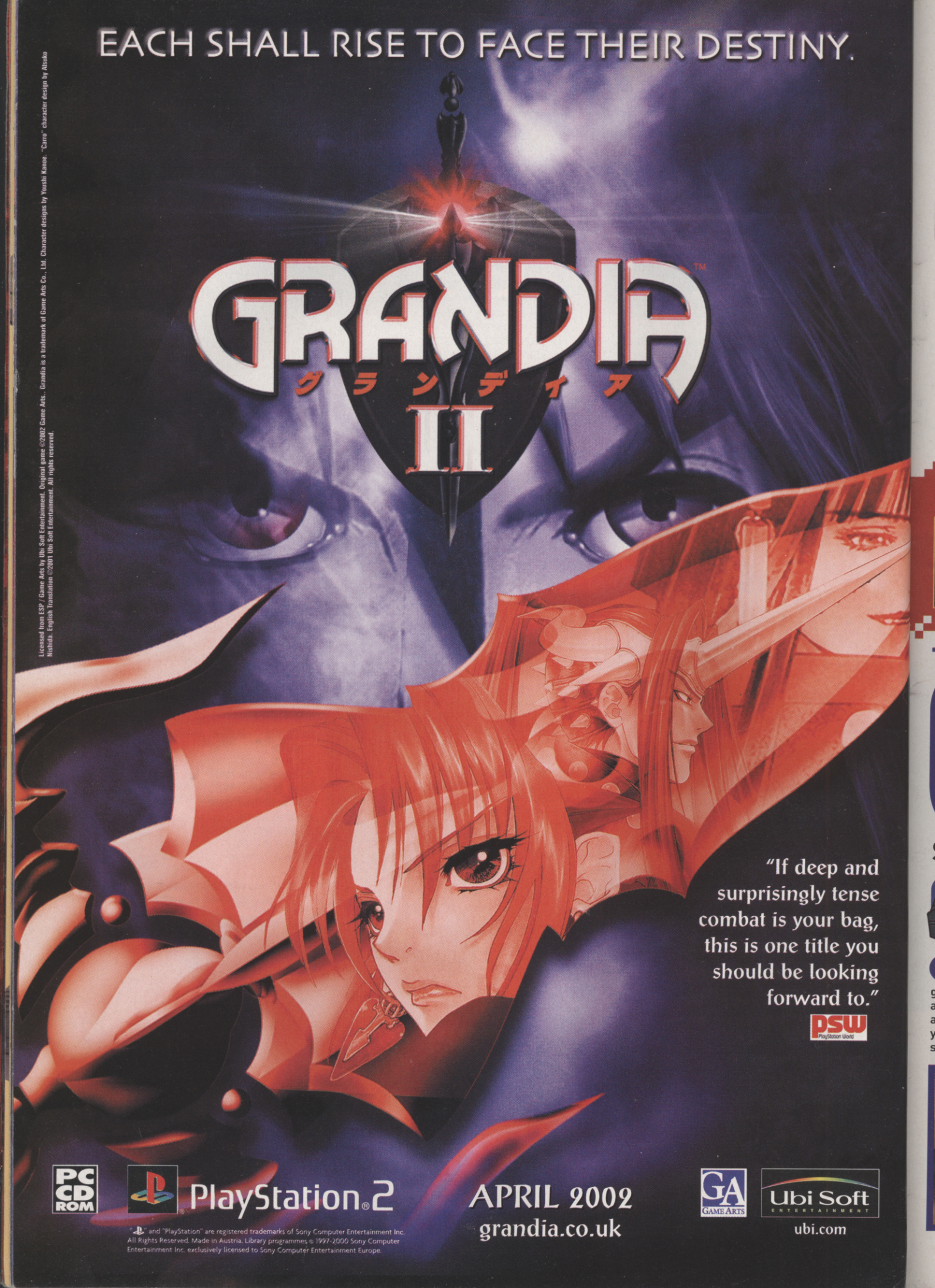
This mini boss has some nice Jedi moves. Watch her 'saber throw

You know when you're in a Wars scrap – everything gets colourful



No need for binoculars, that AT-ST is on you

Lesson one: Wookiee bow versus AT-ST = a stupid Jedi


EACH SHALL RISE TO FACE THEIR DESTINY.
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II
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GA GAME ARTS
Ubi Soft ENTERTAINMENT
ubi.com

Freedom Force

The superheroes are back in town

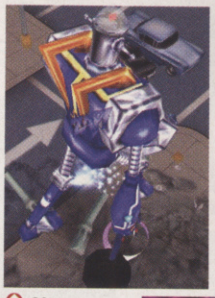
COST: **£29.99**
OUT: **MAY 3**
PLAYERS: **1-4**
DEVELOPER: **IRRATIONAL GAMES**
PUBLISHER: **EA**

Ever walk down the street and feel like picking up a car and hurling it through the air for the sheer hell of it? Well in the 3D role-player Freedom Force you do exactly that, *and* you get lots of cool superhero powers to play with.

Think of the original Spider-Man and Superman comic-book worlds and you're pretty close to what Freedom Force is all about. Take charge of a group of superheroes with names like Man-Bot, Alche-Miss and The Ant, and go out into Patriot City to bag a few bad guys without trashing the place up too much. Each hero has his own superpowers, which develop as he gains experience points by carrying out the somewhat linear missions, and they all come with their own secret tales of origin.

Whether or not comics are your thing, twatting people round the head with a traffic light is sure to raise a smile.

You can easily short circuit robots: all it takes is a well-placed bolt of lightning



Give me your best shot, you walking toaster

Catapult your enemies into the air

Take care of prehistoric predators snacking on the locals

Then close the time portal so the scaly ones can't get through

The joke about his mother and the newt did not go down well

CVG RECKONS

American cheese this might be, but it's vintage cheddar and pure comic book fun. **Rhianna**

8

If you like this try these...
Baldur's Gate 2 (PC), Diablo 2 (PC)

Crash

Smashy, trashy and a waste of cashy

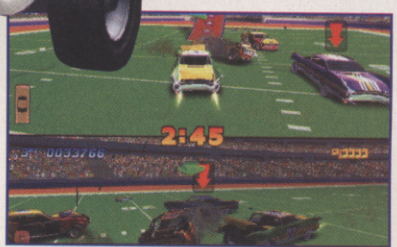
COST: **£44.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-4**
DEVELOPER: **RAGE**
PUBLISHER: **RAGE**

Did you know that as well as being the most powerful daddy in the gaming world, your Xbox also has the ability to turn back time? All you need is a 'box and a copy of Crash. Load it up and you will believe you've travelled back seven years, to a time when a PSone game called Destruction Derby was considered the height of gaming.

NO FRILLS ACTION

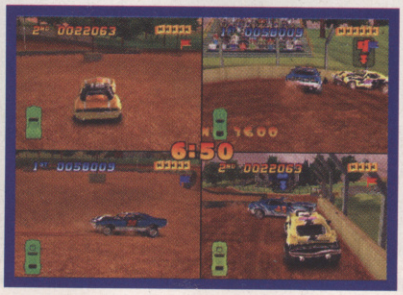
Pick a shiny car then burn round an arena scoring points by smashing into other shiny cars. That's all Destruction Derby did, and it's pretty much all you get with Crash. Cars handle fairly well, but the concept is shallow and playing the game is a joyless experience. Multiplayer games are more bearable, but in no way do they justify the game's existence.

Trashing other cars is risky as you can pummel your own too



You can choose how many bot racers you want in multiplayer

Four-way is probably the best way to play Crash, but it's still not great



The car icon shows how much pranging you can take

CVG RECKONS

With lame presentation, weak structure and plain visuals, Crash bails on most levels. **Lee**

4

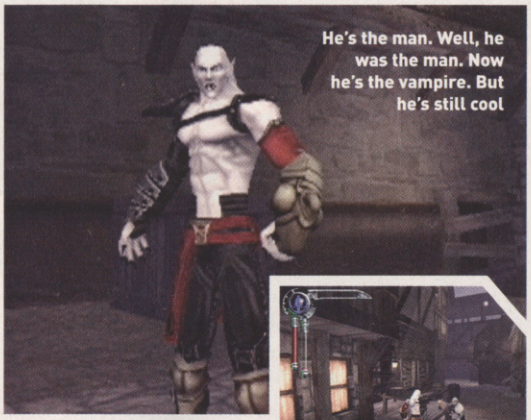
If you like this try these...
Star Wars Demolition (PSone, DC)

Blood Omen 2

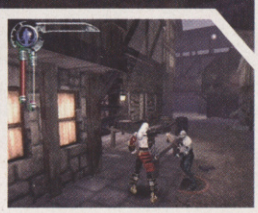
If you thought Dracula was hard, wait till you meet Kain

COST: **£39.00**
OUT: **APRIL**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **CRYSTAL DYNAMICS**
PUBLISHER: **EIDOS**

If you thought getting out of bed on a Monday morning was tough, imagine what it would be like after two centuries of death-like sleep, as in Blood Omen 2. It's not all bad though, as you get a busty vampire lady standing over your bed, telling you to infiltrate the people who have taken your land and save your last remaining vampire buddies from extinction. This is Kain's hangover from hell, and it's our task to play through it in this third-person adventure. All of a sudden a day at school doesn't sound so bad.



He's the man. Well, he was the man. Now he's the vampire. But he's still cool



"Look, I don't have twenty pence for a cup of tea! Anyway, tea costs more than that"

RAISING KAIN

Forget heroes. Kain is an evil vampire villain who's only saving the world so he can rule it himself. So you get to indiscriminately murder innocents for their blood. It's cool to be cruel in BO2.

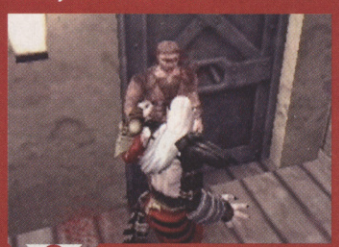
Killing humans is the easy bit, but tackling heavily armoured Sarafan guards is another matter. They attack mercilessly and are armed with magic and some kick-ass weaponry. The ensuing fighting is fluid, with repeated button taps translating into frenzied vampire attacks, and some great weapons to pick up too.

Kain's not just a killer though, he's a sneaky rotter to boot. Tiptoeing around guards is preferable to smacking them on the head, as you're unlikely to kill them outright with one hit. And after all the stealth of MGS2, it's fun to creep up behind them and pull their still-beating

YOU MONSTER!

Killing innocents in Blood Omen 2 isn't just fun, it's also the only way to restore your flagging energy. So when you're feeling low and require a claret-coloured pick-me-up, just get hold of a passer-by and start snacking! Here's how it all works...

Target a victim and he'll back away from you in blind terror

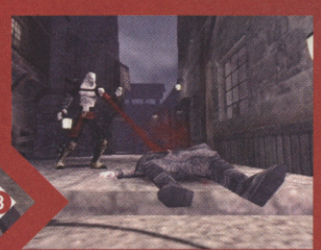


1

2

Swipe him a few times with your massive claws to weaken him

3

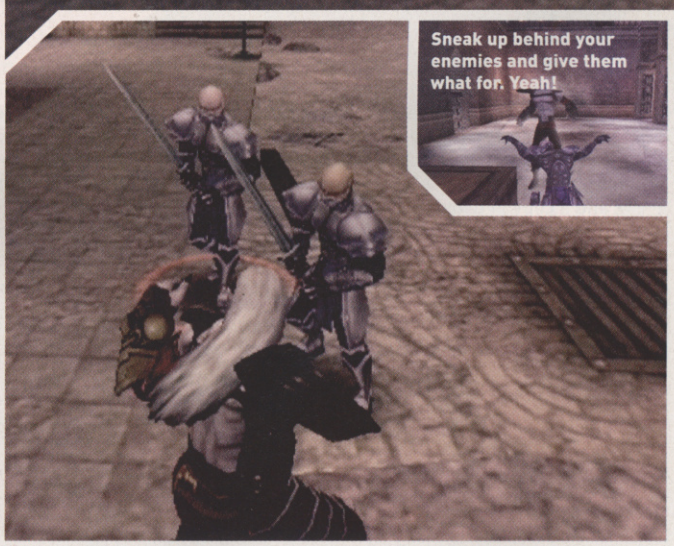


Chuck the guy across the room like the true fiend that you are

Don't forget to drink their blood to get health. Eurgh... cool

Being in a city like this is depressing, even if you're a vampire

Your Sarafan enemies have erected vampire-proof barriers like these. Spoilsports



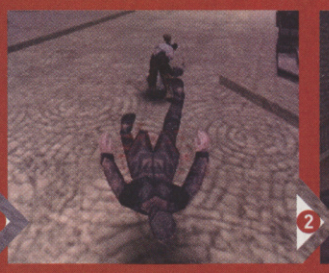
Sneak up behind your enemies and give them what for. Yeah!

Fighting multiple enemies becomes more common as the game progresses

UNEARTHLY POWERS

Anti-hero Kain is a whole lot more than a psycho with a cruel penchant for type 'O' negative. He's also an arcane master of a range of vampire powers, which you'll have the opportunity to access as you progress through the game. Sharp fangs are just the half of it. Some people have all the luck, don't they?

Dissolve into mist, then sneak up behind foes for big laughs



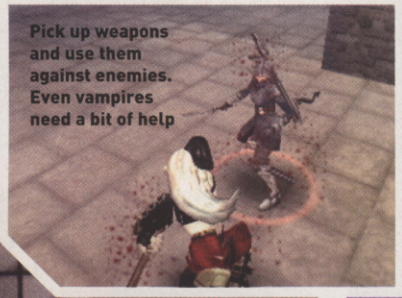
Jump huge distances and land on your foes for a massive attack

You can move giant objects with the power of your, um, hands

hearts from their chests – now that's a cool special move by anyone's standards.

This would be a lot more fun if it wasn't for the usual problem that enemies have in these sort of games: immense stupidity. We still spray Les with holy water every once in a while to check he's not vamped out on us, but these folks don't bat an eyelid when they see a corpse in bondage gear wandering the streets of their city. And that's despite the fact that everyone's on the lookout for vampires.

Kain's never too busy to stop for a quick snack. Beats a burger any day



Pick up weapons and use them against enemies. Even vampires need a bit of help

He's a bit of a ladykiller, that Mr Kain

Locations are impressive – but not exactly original

BLOOD BROTHERS

Blood Omen 2 is also out on Xbox. The difference? Well, the story and levels are identical, although the Xbox version runs more smoothly and everything's more detailed. But can you tell by comparing these screenshots?

Even the Sarafan, who are meant to be your enemies, are often a cinch to evade.

LET'S GET KAINED

Blood Omen 2 won't set your pants on fire with its graphical flair, but it doesn't look too shabby, definitely edging in at the top end of the third-person adventure class. It seems the day of the amazing adventure game may have passed with the death of PSone, though. They're all lacking bite now, and you probably won't see much to surprise you here.

Still, Kain's a great character to play because he's just so evil. Instead of slapping you on the wrist for killing innocents, Blood Omen 2 rewards you by increasing your health and power. The first time you magically suck all the blood out of someone's body, you're bound to grin like Hannibal Lecter. It's just so liberating to be bad for once.

But that's as far as the liberation goes. Don't expect to interact with anything more than switches and levers, or do anything other than run around the levels unlocking doors and killing enemies. Nosgoth is such a dreary place, that you never feel like you're really immersed in the game world. Unlike in, say, Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons Of Liberty, you rarely get the sense that this is a living environment and you're just one of the people in it. Instead, Nosgoth can feel a bit too empty at times. So even if you win the game and become master of all you survey, Kain will be left with one lonely world to rule. Poor old sucker.

Hang around at the docks to try to find some action. Cue sailor-boy jokes

Find chests like these to increase your magic levels

CVG RECKONS

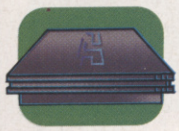
Lots of gut-spilling, flesh-rending fun, but there's not much you haven't seen before. **Joff**

7

If you like this try this...
Drakan: The Ancients Gates (PS2)

Mad Maestro!

Grab your baton to please the crowds



COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **SONY**
PUBLISHER: **EIDOS**

Aside from making your thumbs throb from hammering the accelerate button in GT3, those analog PS2 pads haven't been good for much. Until now, that is.

Mad Maestro! is a crazy music game where you use different amounts of finger pressure to conduct an orchestra. It's rhythm action with a cool new twist and we like it a whole lot.

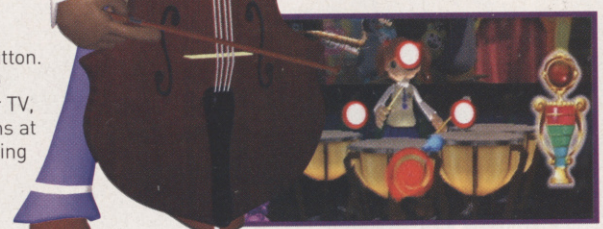
SINGLE FINGER FUN

For the most part, Mad Maestro! uses just one button. An on-screen metronome passes over icons on your TV, and you need to hit buttons at the right strength depending on the icon's colour: blue for weak, green for medium, red for strong.

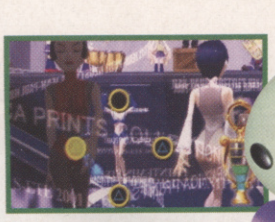
You also have to make sure you lead at an appropriate tempo and occasionally you need to conduct different parts of the orchestra with a tap of a direction button.

There are so many tunes, mini-games and rewards for perseverance that it'll probably last you longer than any other rhythm action game around right now. It's an ingenious concept, and makes for surprisingly tense gameplay, but it's only ever going to have limited appeal.

You need to play well enough to fill the bar on the left



Red means hammer the button as hard as possible, even if it breaks your thumbs



Do well enough and you get to freestyle to a new tune

The background action is cool but you miss it when playing

It's amazing how much of the music you recognise

3D Backgrounds are ace

CVG RECKONS

Even if you think classical music is as cool as a library tea room, you might enjoy this. £40 is a bit steep though... Lee

6

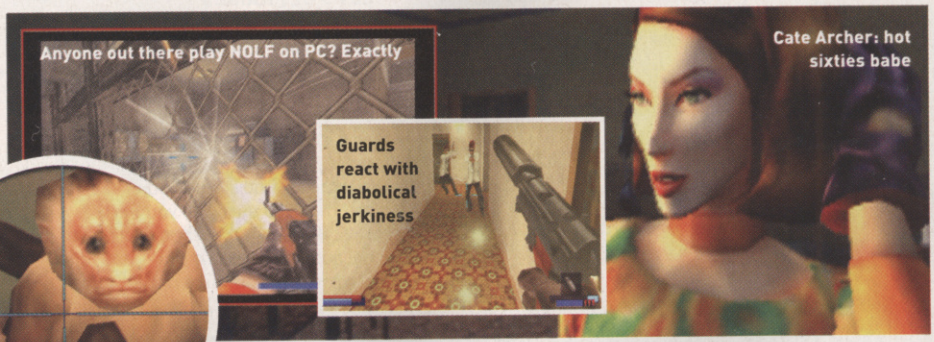
If you like this try this...
The Last Night of the Proms (BBC2)

No One Lives Forever

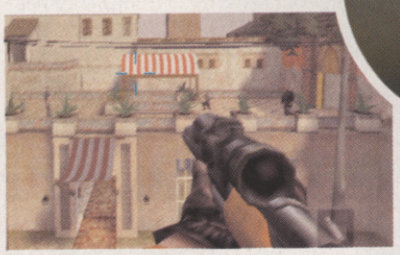
Shagadelic hot chick goes spying? Sounds groovy. It's not

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **END OF APRIL**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **MONOLITH**
PUBLISHER: **FOX INTERACTIVE**

Take 007, turn him into a foxy chick in a first person shooter, inject some Austin Powers-style humour, and you'll end up with something like No One Lives Forever.



"Nobody moves or the damn monkey gets it"



Missions like this provide some challenges

NOLF sees you as '60s spy Cate Archer, an agent for anti-terrorist organisation UNITY. You guide her through shootouts and stealth sections, taking in locations from Morocco to Berlin. Levels see you battling criminals and communist troops in standard FPS style, making contact with other spies and friendly agents along the way. At your disposal is an array of '60s shooters and gizmos such as picture-taking sunglasses and exploding lipstick.

But NOLF is a conversion of a PC game that wasn't very good in the first place. The graphics are weak: characters move like puppets on a string and the environments lack detail. Enemy AI is similarly poor, with guards ignoring rifle fire just round the corner, and charging about like excited boy-scouts when in combat.

Plenty of levels and a sense of humour don't make up for a bog-standard conversion of what was already a dubious game, and the lack of multiplayer is unforgivable.

CVG RECKONS

If you've got a barge pole, be careful not to let it touch this. Steve O

4

If you like this try this...
Deus Ex (PC/PS2)

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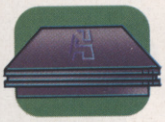
2002 FIFA World Cup

Want a souvenir of the finals? Here's one that fits inside your PS2



COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **APRIL 26**
PLAYERS: **1-8**
DEVELOPER: **EA**
PUBLISHER: **EA**

By rights, they shouldn't sell this in game shops at all. It should be racked next to the mugs, pens and other silly merchandise. The box says it's the game of the World Cup and it is.

Player names are spot on, although the developers have made some odd choices as to who would make the starting eleven for most countries. There are giant windsock puppet men dancing in the corners of the stadium and it all looks pretty damn close to how it will on TV. Which is pretty much all the casual buyer will want, and fair play to him.

THIRD DIVISION

Is it a world-beating footy game? No way. Like a World Cup mug is the same as a normal mug, this is essentially the same game as FIFA 2002. The graphics are sharper (at the cost of a glitchy framerate when things hot up) and the new gameplay addition is the ability to do keepy-ups – a feature the N64 ISS games had until they realised it was pointless.

2002 FIFA World Cup plays a clumsy game of football. It's easier to dribble the ball than pass it, as the game draws dots on the pitch to show player runs and the game also makes pass execution frustratingly hit-and-miss. Creating a scoring chance isn't hard, though you'll often hammer stupidly wide and wonder why. When the roar goes up for a goal, you don't feel nearly as pumped, as goals come pretty cheaply.

Big scores are often in evidence, but you'll get more satisfaction from Pro Evolution Soccer. Even vocals from Motty and Andy Gray can't disguise the fact that this is just another piece of World Cup merchandise. We know it, EA knows it.

Do not adjust your set. Heskey has scored

The Czech players' camp protest lets in Brazil to score

Nicer graphics than FIFA 2002, but jerkier

WE CAN WIN THIS

In some lame predicting exercise, we decided to play the championship as England first time we loaded it. No reading the manual, no setting it on Easy mode. Go on the England!

Group stage: 2-1 vs Sweden, 8-2 vs Argentina, 8-0 vs Nigeria. Then caned France 3-1 and Tunisia 5-0

Beat Brazil 3-0 in the semis, then Spain in the final

CVG RECKONS

No doubt it will feed World Cup fever adequately enough, but at the end of the day, it plays only average football. **Dean**

6

If you like this try this...
Pro Evolution Soccer (PS2)

WHO ARE YA?

The players look like stunted dwarf men, but the faces are pretty impressive. Check out the English.

DAVID SEAMAN 5/10

GARY NEVILLE 2/10

SOL CAMPBELL 8/10

RIO FERDINAND 9/10

PHIL NEVILLE 2/10

DAVID BECKHAM 9/10

PAUL SCHOLES 10/10

STEVEN GERRARD 8/10

MICHAEL OWEN 10/10

EMILE HESKEY 8/10

ROBBIE FOWLER 9/10

LMA Manager 2002

Statistics mad? This is the game for you

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **2**
DEVELOPER: **CODEMASTERS**
PUBLISHER: **CODEMASTERS**

Dust off your sheepskin jacket and polish your plate-sized signet rings because PS2's first footie management game has finally arrived. And unlike most soccer heroes, LMA 2002 is a star with intelligence and sophistication.

If you're reading this then you're probably a stats pervert, so feast your number-hungry eyes on these dreamy figures: 722 European clubs, 28 countries and 17,000 up-to-date players from the 2001/2002 season, with 32-player manageable squads. Impressive! But where LMA 2002 really pulls off a stellar performance is in the gameplay department, reeling you in with its hugely comprehensive menu system, rewarding tactical action, and brilliant AI.

Watching your mid-match decisions come to life on the pitch after you've built up and trained a squad is satisfying and addictive, even if you make the wrong decisions, because the match engine is super-smart – players act intelligently, and their abilities are brilliantly represented on the pitch, enabling you to see exactly how your strategies are affecting play. Correcting your tactics will trigger obvious changes in the action, but these are well balanced and realistic enough to keep you hooked and force you to delve even further into the game.

There's never one simple solution for success. But footy management games are aimed at a specific breed of gamer willing to sacrifice social life and permanent employment for the good of 32 athletic men, and if you feel that you fall into that category, LMA 2002 should whet your whistle.

Train the whole team or focus on specific players

You can change your game plan mid-match if you want

The tactics screens are very comprehensive

Sit in the dugout and watch how the game unfolds

CVG RECKONS

A tactically topnotch strategy fest, packed with stats, good-looking layouts, and class gameplay. **Mike**

8

If you like this try this...
Championship Manager 01/02 (Xbox)

Star Wars: Jedi Starfighter

Like watching Return of the Return Of The Jedi twice in one day

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **LUCASARTS**
PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**

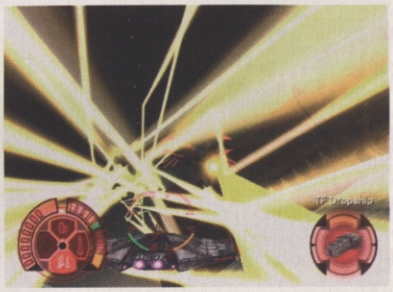
We're used to repackaged games by now. More of the same isn't always a bad thing, and this is true in the case of Jedi Starfighter.

Look upon it as the sum of everybody's 'Wouldn't It Be Cool If...' wish list, dreamt up while playing the original. Like, wouldn't it be cool if you could be a Jedi and use The Force to launch special attacks or defend your ship? Or, wouldn't it be cool if you were somehow playing a role in the new movie, instead of another sideline story? Well now you can, and on both counts the answer is 'yes'.

The new Jedi Starfighter is piloted by a Jedi Council member named Master Adi Gallia. She joins the first game's hero Nym, who returns with his bomber. But now there's no third character .

Obviously it's much more fun learning how to pilot the new craft and master the use of its weapons. But the balance of missions, in which you are forced to switch between Nym's bomber and Adi's ultra sleek ship, makes for a worthy new package. More of the same and still too slow, but fun nonetheless, especially for Wars fans.

One of the tastier levels sees you protecting this spaceport from evil Trade Federation Hex bombers



Nym's ship gets some ultra sexy weapons once it's fully powered up. Oooooh, pretty

Look, you can unlock the TIE Fighter! It's quick but only has lasers

Destroy the shield generator? Haven't we seen this somewhere before?

CVG RECKONS

Hard to fight off deja-vu during missions, but there's only so many ways you can do this. **Paul**

6

If you like this try this...
Starfighter (PS2), Rogue leader (GC)

Grandia II

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **GAME ARTS**
PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**

With a PAL Final Fantasy X not out till the end of May, here's a more than competent role-player to tide you over while you're waiting.

On first glance Grandia II might look like a kids' game, but the story is quite brutal and the original combat system is an outstanding new take on role-play battling. Fights aren't random either, so you get to see your foe before they strike.

Overall, a great RPG that's let down by the way that it plays the same as the year-old Dreamcast game, and looks much worse.

7

Fight giant bosses

Religion, death, love and turn-based combat. What more could you want? Bok!

Alfred Chicken

COST: **£19.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **KING MONKEY**
PUBLISHER: **SONY**

Fun for kids, and that's no yolk. Oh

Eight out of 10 chickens prefer Alfred's game

Sick of the monotony of the farmyard and the same old feed day in day out (probably), Alfred is a chicken on a mission. You have to help him negotiate a series of side-scrolling levels, looking for hidden eggs, pecking at bad guys and sniffing out secrets with his beak.

Sadly, Alfred's a chicken who's somewhat lacking in the personality stakes and his game doesn't seem to make sense. However, if you have a strong desire to collect random objects in bright environments, this could be for you. Clucking good fun for kids.

6

Tricky in real life, a cinch in this game

Done that now. What's next?

Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2

COST: **£44.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **Z-AXIS**
PUBLISHER: **ACCLAIM**

Some of the graphical glitches of the previous game may have been given the Xbox Mr Sheen treatment, but the basic gameplay faults remain intact in this new version, despite the fact that two extra courses have been tacked on.

With tricks being so easy to land, thanks to the sloppy stunt system, the level objectives are simple to achieve. It isn't doing anything that hasn't been done before though, and more importantly isn't doing it any better on Xbox than on any other system.

5

Crash Bandicoot: The Wrath Of Cortex

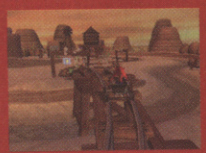
The bandicoot bursts onto the 'Box. Hold onto your knickers!

COST: **£44.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **TRAVELLERS TALES**
PUBLISHER: **VIVENDI UNIVERSAL**

He's been well and truly spruced, scrubbed and fully buffed with Super Xbox polish. Crash Bandicoot, no longer shackled to his Sony daddy, is now free to spread platform game love across as many formats as the world can handle.

The gameplay remains pretty much unchanged from the PlayStation 2 version.

Coco joins in the fun later in the game



Ugh... the mine cart level. Again!

If you look very closely you should be able to see Crash's fuzzy fur. Aw, cute

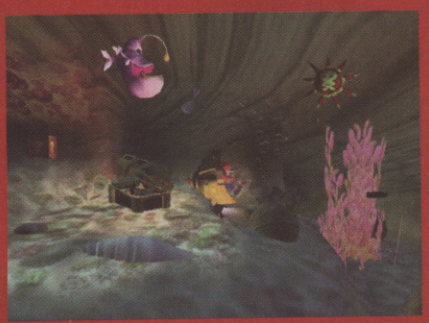
Even so, Xbox can't help showing off its graphics-pushing power, and has thrown in a few special effects, improved textures and a vastly improved soundtrack. Crash himself has 'real' fur now too. Like, wow.

Crash is a fine game that remains fun from beginning to end while doing absolutely nothing new. Like this month's GBA Bandicoot bonanza (see page 104), you know exactly what you're going to get and you know you're going to have a blast.

We're still waiting to see the killer Xbox platform adventure, but in the meantime Crash Bandicoot is about as good as it gets.

7

Like at the end of Aliens, but with an orange rat



Nice visuals but they add nothing to the game

Backdraft: douse the flames

Escort ET to his spacecraft

Universal Studios Theme Park

Age restrictions apply! Must be four or under

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **MAY 3**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **KEMCO**
PUBLISHER: **KEMCO**

Jaws lunges out of the water and bites a fat chunk out of your boat, so you retaliate by lobbing some TNT at his leathery bonce. It might sound violent, but Universal Studios is about as bloody and nasty as a teddy bear's picnic. Unless you enjoy running amok in Spider-Man pyjamas, are under four-foot tall and were born before 1992, this isn't likely to do much for you.

The eight mini-games in Universal Studios are all based on heavyweight Hollywood blockbusters, including ET, Back To The Future, and Jurassic Park. The aim is to stop off at each of the park's attractions and complete games in order to win tickets. Putting out fires and rescuing civilians within a strict time limit in the Backdraft game, shooting the crap out of a T-Rex and hoards of Velociraptors as they try to smash up your jeep in Jurassic Park, and delivering ET to his spaceship a la Paperboy, are a few of the challenges you're faced with.

Problem is, the games aren't very long or addictive and there aren't enough of them to make this feel like a whole game, but little'uns should dig the simple action, cutesy graphics and cool movie music. Strictly for kids!

4

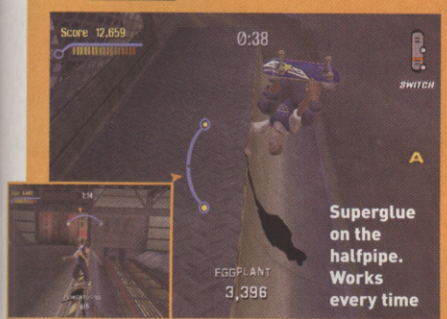
Ram the crap out of Biff in your flying DeLorean

Shoot the king of the dinos

Just twat him with a bomb

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3

COST: **£29.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-8 (ONLINE)**
DEVELOPER: **NEVERSOFT**
PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**



Superglue on the halfpipe. Works every time

Mastering balance is the key to high scores

Inject your PC with a dose of limb-snapping action in the form of Tony 3. This is an awesome conversion that boasts all the mint challenges, stages and Internet multiplayer options of the PS2 game (plus extra online play modes), and the acrobatics feel and look just as fluid and crisp as its console counterpart.

As well as being able to use a standard PC joypad, an adaptor will soon be released for PC which will allow you to use a PS2 pad as a controller too, so you can experience the game as it was originally designed to be played. If you've only got a PC, this is a must-have.

9

Worms Blast

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **TEAM 17**
PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**

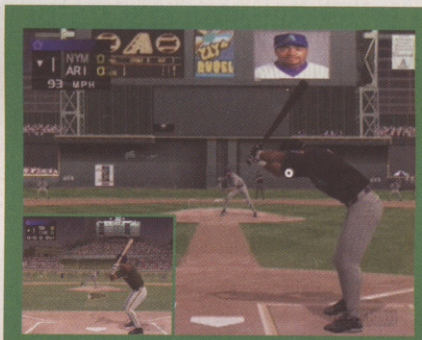
This latest Worms spin-off has arrived in puzzle-game form, where you use familiar weapons like bazookas and dynamite to 'tactically' destroy Bust-A-Move-style coloured blobs.

But unlike the fantastic Bust-A-Move, this looks and plays like cold sick. The one-player veers from uninspired to plain annoying – each playable character paddles around in a dinghy, making the controls slow and unresponsive – while the two-player mode is unforgivably boring, revolving around who gets the best random power-up.

3

No-one needs to play this

Shoot all the green blobs. Then turn off the PS2 and weep for your wasted cash



It's Wrigley Field! Woooh

The main source of enjoyment – hit the bowler

All-Star Baseball 2003

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **ACCLAIM**
PUBLISHER: **ACCLAIM**

If you think that baseball is simply a glorified version of rounders, then this game's not for you.

For hardened baseball freaks though, the improved AI, super-slinky player animation and hundreds of player cards to collect, should make All-Star Baseball 2003 stiffen your bat.

However, CVG can't help but think that compared to other sports, baseball doesn't work as well as a videogame, especially in the UK. At its most basic it just comes down to pressing one button at the right time. Oh well.

6

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Next Month In computer and video GAMES

HERE WE GO, HERE WE GO, HERE WE GOOOOOOO!

Free Panini officially licensed 2002 FIFA World Cup sticker album and stickers for every reader? Has CVG gone footy insane? Yes, but you're worth it

CVG EXCLUSIVE

Dino flesh-shredding Turok special! Xbox, PS2 and GameCube

FINAL, FINAL, FINAL, FINAL, FINAL, FINAL, FINAL, FINAL, FINAL, *FINAL*, FANTASY

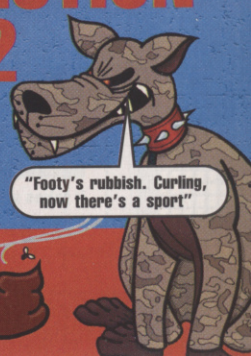
Is the 10th instalment *the* Fantasy? Check out our definitive review

TEKKEN 4

Gets a thorough work-out in CVG's playtest gym

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 2

Better than watching the World Cup



CVG Issue 247. Out May 9. It's bang on goal

Order Ref: P205

HANDHEL

CVG'S INDISPENSABLE GUIDE TO THE BEST WAYS TO KEEP YOUR

CRASH BANDICOOT XS

FORMAT: **GBA** COST: **£34.99** PLAYERS: **1-4** OUT: **NOW** DEVELOPER: **VICARIOUS VISIONS** PUBLISHER: **VIVENDI UNIVERSAL**

Spin into the penguins to send them whizzing off screen

Crash can belly-slam baddies and crates too

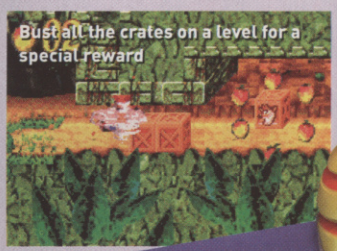
The swirling warp portal clears and you're left to contemplate this strange new world you've been transported to. At first it seems just like the ordinary, real world. The people look the same, the April weather is still miserable and aside from Marilyn Manson fans, there are few freakish creatures to worry yourselves about.

But hang on a minute – what's this you spy in a games shop window? It's a terrifying threesome, a dirty menage a trois: a Mario game rubbing box-edges with a Sonic game, nestling cosily next to a Crash Bandicoot game. All available on the same system. What kind of freakish alternate reality is this?!

For the first time ever, three of gaming's biggest rival mascots have worked out their differences and been able to rub shoulders vigorously on Nintendo's handheld. Shocking stuff, and happily it means Game Boy Advance owners get the pick of some of the choicest platform action the world of games has to offer.

EAT THEM APPLES

Crash Bandicoot XS is ace. Everything that made the goggle-eyed marsupial so popular on Sony machines is faithfully recreated on GBA. From the classic theme tune and instantly memorable sound effects, to the high octane



Bust all the crates on a level for a special reward

These plants must like the taste of Bandicoot fritters

The furry fella makes history. One small step for Bandicoot...

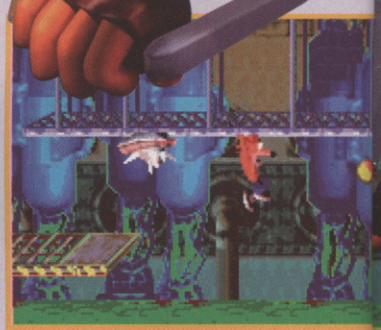
Crash isn't as fast as Sonic but he's got more moves

Don't take any crap from the purple cat thing

Uka Uka, the floating mask, acts as a temporary shield

It takes ages to wash the goop out of Bandicoot fur

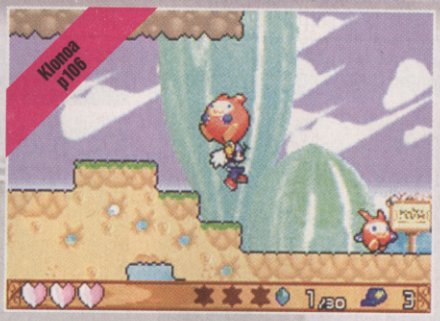
Swimming with sharks is bad for a Bandicoot's health



Don't let the 'hog prong your ass

LDS

UR HANDS BUSY



Spin the bad guys around your head, then lob them at yet more enemies! Check out our Klonoa review!

Blood, sweat and gears! Latest shots of awesome new version of the classic rally franchise

THE WOW FACTOR

Once every couple of levels, Crash XS produces something really special that shows you extra effort has been put into making the game a real handheld gem. These are sections guaranteed to make your face smile; check 'em out!

Welcome to Crash Airways Flight 365 to death and destruction!

Take down all the giant blimps for a chance to win this level's gem

If you thought trying to outrun a big blue Yeti was bad...

...just wait until you have to avoid bombs as well

crate destruction and apple-munching joy of the scrolling levels. Heck, you even get to play the famous into-the-screen chase sections and flying levels, courtesy of GBA's cheeky pseudo 3D trickery.

Like every other Crash game the levels are accessed from a hub system, this time taking the form of a crazy kind of elevator. When you first start the game, you can only access the five levels on the first floor. Clear these levels (by grabbing the special gem in each one) and then fight the boss to secure access to a new floor.

Each area just begs to be replayed too, as you get special rewards for busting all the crates in an area, for the fastest time, and for finding hidden routes.

Break open crates to get apples and extra lives, too

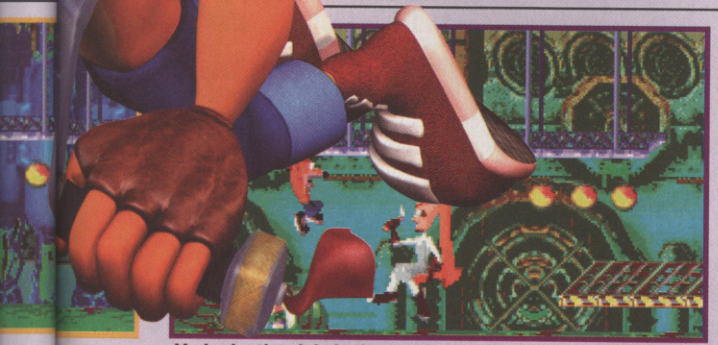
Boss fight! Put some elbow grease into it, beat him, and win a new power

Crash bathes in the light of the, er, sewers

Dangers lurk everywhere as you swim the deep

Shark attack! Spin into them and they won't trouble you

The game is chock-a-block with tribal jungly goodness



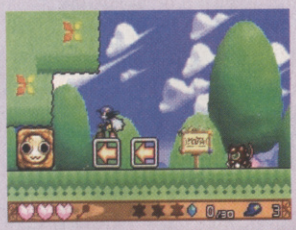
Mad scientists join in the attack, blasting lasers at you

The levels themselves are pure platforming bliss. You want to go diving in the deep mysterious ocean, or explore ancient ruins with lava pools bubbling up beneath your furry orange butt. It's all here, and so much more.

SURPRISE AND AMAZE

That said, what Crash XS offers in terms of content is in no way surprising. There's nothing here that you haven't seen and played in another Crash game on another system. But the fact that it plays so brilliantly and is so well put together on GBA is where the amazement lies. The game will last and last too, with loads of ways to replay and enjoy each level all over again. Crash XS proves that the ginger marsupial is indeed worthy of rubbing shoulders with Mario and Sonic, and is a game no platform fan should miss.

8



The arrows may be trying to tell you something

It's one of the brightest and most colourful games on GBA

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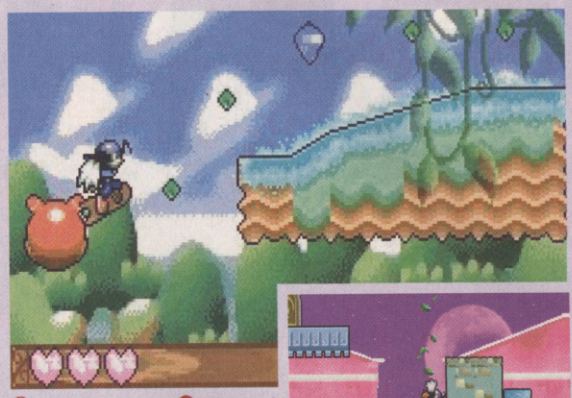


Surf the raging rivers, dragging enemy puffballs in your wake. Yes!

You need to ride air currents to find the stars

KLONOA: EMPIRE OF DREAMS

COST: **£34.99** PLAYERS: **1** OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **NAMCO** PUBLISHER: **INFOGRAMES**

Dreams are mental. One minute you're nuzzling cosily between Jordan's love pillows and the next you're having your head crushed in a vice by a bearded man wearing a gas mask and wet suit. But even by CVG's standards, Klonoa's dreams take things to the next level of weird, as you Journey to the floppy-eared cat-dog-rabbit creature's warped nocturnal neverland in this fantastic platform adventure.

Select the level you want to travel to from the handy world map

Press and hold the jump button to flap your ears and hover

Bosses thunder around the screen chasing after poor little Klonoa. Give him a break!

SNIGGER SNIGGER

Grabbing and throwing bad guys is what Klonoa is all about. Klonoa has a golden shiny ring that he can flash at bad guys to make them grow bigger. Use the ring to stun your foes and then carry them around above your head. Lob them at another enemy or obstacle, or use them to propel yourself higher into the air. Different enemies react in different ways: some explode on a timed fuse, some destroy all in their path, and others are colour-coded and can be pelted at multiple enemies of the corresponding colour to solve puzzles. But whatever the puzzle, you'll be lobbing baddies to solve it.

There's more to Klonoa than simply getting to the end of each stage, though. You need to seek out the three stars on each level and use the objects and enemies you find to reach them. There are big bonuses for collecting all the crystals too, and plenty of rewards to keep you playing over and over again.

Packed into the game are high-speed chase sections on jet-powered surfboards, loads of levels to try and re-try for bonuses, and awesome boss fights. Klonoa has so much charm that you'll kiss your GBA for making your dreams for an original and addictive platform game come true.

Balls and cubes haunt Klonoa's dream-filled slumber

8

COST: **£29.99** PLAYERS: **1** OUT: **NOW** DEVELOPER: **FLUID STUDIOS** PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**

ET THE EXTRA TERRESTRIAL

Keep away from the guards or they'll do very bad things to the boys

Cycle through the night skies, just like in the movie

He's got fingers you could unblock a toilet with, has ET

Goodbyes leave us with soggy tissues

We've always thought that ET looks a bit like a giant turd with eyes. And just like catching a whiff of someone else's unflushed log, his movie has the ability to bring tears to grown men's eyes. It's the first ET game in years, released to coincide with the movie's anniversary re-release. And the surprise is it's not at all bad.

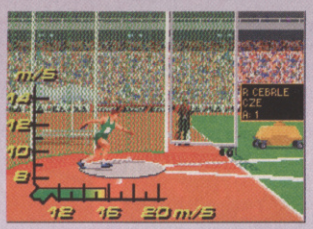
RED-ENDED FINGER

Licensed games often come in for a real kicking for not being true to the movie or show they've been lifted from. While we may not be entirely safe from the threat of ET Kart heading our way some time in the future, we can at least rest easy for the moment with this pretty enjoyable and totally true-to-the-movie action game.

You get to control ET and Eliott in levels that have been plucked straight from the tear-jerker. It's not the most refined game, but the variation between levels is great and it has the ET charm in buckets. Younger players especially will enjoy it.

7

You need huge biceps for the shot put

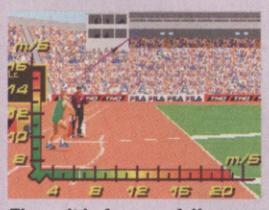


Don't throw hammers at home, kids

FILA DECATHLON

COST: **£34.99** PLAYERS: **1-4** OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **ATHLETIC DESIGN** PUBLISHER: **THQ**

Bodging the pole vault *hurts*



Throw it before you fall over

Button-bashing sports games need to be instantly accessible to be any fun, especially in multiplayer. This is where Fila Decathlon falls down: it may have ten great events and flashy looks, but the controls for each event are over-complicated.

To get the best from the game you need to dedicate lots of time in the practice events, learning the complex button combos. Fine if you've got the time in one-player games, but it makes for rubbish multiplayer events with people who don't know the mechanics as well as you do.

6

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3

COST: **£34.99** PLAYERS: **1-4** OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **VICARIOUS VISIONS** PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**

Ollie over cakes on the cruise ship

The visuals are slick and sick

See your rivals' ghosts

The smug skater is everywhere and now you can mash him up some more on Game Boy Advance.

This time there are six enormous and gorgeous arenas and six different multiplayer games. There's even a Create-A-Skater mode, where you can tailor your hero's looks. It's great, but even with these additions TH3 is more an update than a full sequel. Not essential if you already own Tony 2.

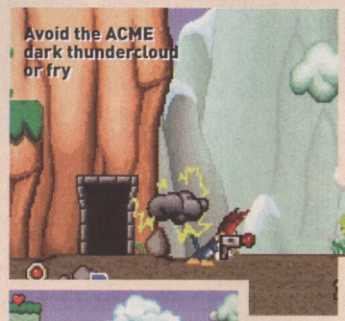
8

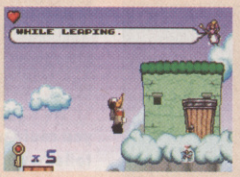
WOODY WOODPECKER IN CRAZY CASTLE 5

PLAYERS: **1** OUT: **MAY** DEVELOPER: **TANTALUS** PUBLISHER: **KEMCO**

Crazy Castle used to be Bugs Bunny's domain. Now the former carrot-munching star of Game Boy Color has handed the baton of handheld platform game greatness to Woody Woodpecker.

Six universes await, each with a different, and no doubt suitably 'crazy', theme. Woody himself, as well as being made out of polygons, can change into different togs like wizard and space men costumes, and use their unique skills. Possibly one for younger players, but looks pretty swish.





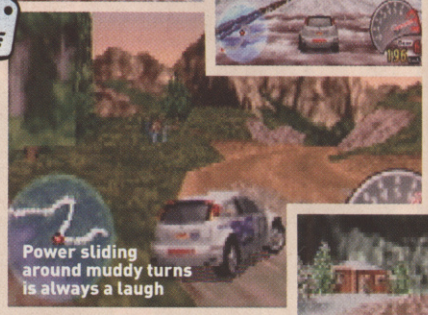
Leap like a lark, tap wood like a 'pecker

Let's hope they keep the annoying laugh to a minimum

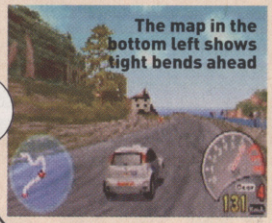
Cute cutscenes tell the story

It's supposed to be the first full 3D game on GBA...

...but the weak Cruis'n Velocity was 3D too



Power sliding around muddy turns is always a laugh



The map in the bottom left shows tight bends ahead

The snow effects seem a bit special

BLENDER BROS

PLAYERS: **1** OUT: **MAY** DEVELOPER: **TANTALUS** PUBLISHER: **KEMCO**

Each planet has its own distinct look and feel

This looks awesome. Journey to a world where scientists have created artificially evolved humans called Animal-Men. War is waging, and only the canine Animal-Man called Blender can put things right.

Sneak up behind the weird mice, then let fly with your attacks

Look at the crazy dog racing sections! How cool?

We wonder if you can leave a dog egg on this lush green field

Make sure you grab as many bones as possible (snigger)

Cross a man with a dog and you get a creature with 'copter ears... or Rayman

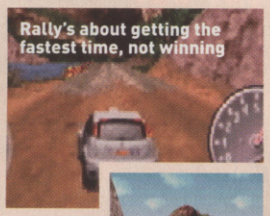
Blender Bros gives you a huge galaxy to explore, with levels set on each of the planets. As one of the Animal-Men, Blender has special abilities like fighting, jumping and flying. Yet more platform action for GBA, but looks original enough to stand out.

There are multiplayer games in there for four players, amazing racing sections, and levels that scroll and rotate around your hero. Sounds fantastic – we'll have a review soon.

PLAYERS: **TBC**
OUT: **JUNE** DEVELOPER: **INFOGRAMES**
PUBLISHER: **INFOGRAMES**

V-RALLY 3

Very little in the way of details released so far for the first handheld version of Infogrames's storming rally series, but there are loads of screens doing the rounds. We thought they were too good not to show you. More when we have it!



The trees look nice – smash 'em!

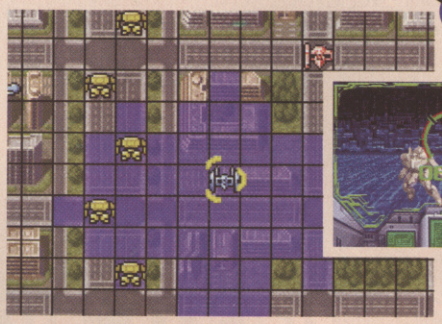
No other cars on track as yet

ZOE: THE FIST OF MARS

PLAYERS: **1** OUT: **SUMMER** DEVELOPER: **KONAMI** PUBLISHER: **KONAMI**

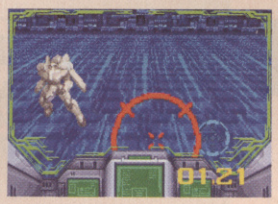
We've been right behind ZOE on GBA ever since sniffing out the first screens months ago, and we can't resist the opportunity to share new images and info.

The first piece of good news is that the game is definitely coming out over here. The second is that it's looking every bit as in-depth and tactically brilliant as our current strategy-battle favourite, Advance Wars. There's even a spot of real-time action in the battle sequences, where you fire and defend with button presses. Giant robots! Futuristic battles! Who could possibly resist?



Move your unit to the blue area

Hammer buttons to dodge blows



Battles are partly real-time

Better check your stats

CRAZY CHASE

PLAYERS: **1** OUT: **MAY** DEVELOPER: **KEMCO**
PUBLISHER: **KEMCO**

The GBA is a happy home for conversions of old games, especially when they're spruced up and redesigned specifically for the handheld. Once a star of the SNES scene, Kid Clown wants to make hands happy once again on GBA in Crazy Chase.

Like the name suggests, the game is a mad chase from the top of the level to the bottom, and you're forced to run along a set path. On the way you need to keep your clowning wits about you, as there are enemies, obstacles and natural hazards to catch your clown-pants on and lose a life.

Levels are set around cool themes and the graphics are lush, especially in the city and forest levels. You even get that classic mine cart level platform game cliche. It's retro, but will probably be one of the better conversions of old games on the system.

Slipping and sliding are guaranteed in the ice world

Lava is bad for clowns cos it melts the greasepaint

Ghosts and transparency effects galore in the caves

Make it to the rocket to clear each level

Don't get mown down – the blood will clash with your outfit

CVG Trailb

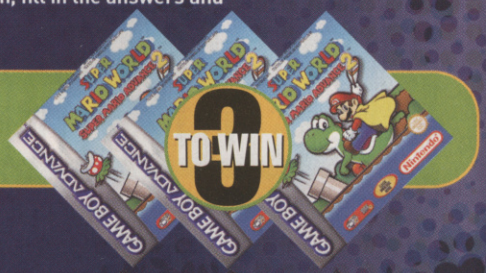
Nintendo fever! Five GameCubes and shedloads of awesome GC and GBA games up for grabs. Hallelujah!

START HERE

Be one of five lucky gits to walk away with a shiny new GameCube and a copy of Luigi's Mansion. Plus, we've got tons of trouser-arousing titles like Super Mario Advance 2, Burnout and Sonic Adventure 2, meaning this month's Trailblazer is just about ready to burst. There's only one way to stand a chance of winning all these top treats: cut out the freakin' coupon, fill in the answers and send it to us NOW. Simple.

7th SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 2

COURTESY OF **NINTENDO**



Gaming icons don't get much bigger than this hairy little hero. Playing Super Mario World on Nintendo's handheld is an experience not to be missed. Win it!

Q. By what other name is Princess Toadstool known?

A. Peach **B.** Apple **C.** Plum **D.** Grape

6th PLANET MONSTERS & MIDNIGHT CLUB

COURTESY OF **TITAS/DIGITAL**

Win Planet Monsters and get stuck into some hardcore battling fun for up to four players, and tear up the streets of the Big Apple and London in Midnight Club. You've got the chance to win both.

Q. Here's an easy one. What score did CVG give Planet Monsters?

A. 0/10 **B.** 8/10 **C.** 99% **D.** 3 Golden Nuggets

5th DRIVEN

COURTESY OF **BAM!**

Hit insane speeds in Driven against troops of other hard-nosed speed freaks.

Q. Which legendary Hollywood muscle-head plays the main role in the movie?

A. Sylvester Stallone **B.** Arnold Schwarzenegger **C.** Jean-Claude Van Damme **D.** Vin Diesel

4th CEL DAMAGE

COURTESY OF **EA**

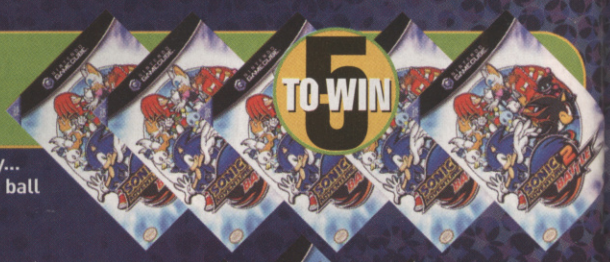
This cartoony car combat game sees you leathering around in wacky vehicles, chopping your buddies in half with axes and maiming opponents with ridiculously enormous weapons. Cool.

Q. In our preview in issue 243, CVG said Cel Damage "feels cheerier than an episode of" ...what?

A. The Flumps **B.** The Tweenies **C.** The Smurfs **D.** The Bill

3rd SONIC ADVENTURE 2: BATTLE

COURTESY OF **INFOGRAMES**



Connect your GameCube to your GBA and unite them in a perfect umbilical harmony... or just run around and crash through the sound barrier as Sega's cutesy, spiky blue ball of fun on GameCube. The choice is yours!

Q. What are the little blue drip-headed creatures in Sonic Adventure 2 called?

A. Chuddies **B.** Charmeleons **C.** Chocobos **D.** Chaos

2nd BURNOUT

COURTESY OF **ACCLAIM**

Throw your Highway Code out of the window, slam your foot on the accelerator and don't remove it, ever. If you get off on pure adrenalin and traffic accidents, look no further. Insanely cool!

Q. Who developed Acclaim's smash-happy racing game?

A. Criterion **B.** Capcom **C.** Core **D.** Crawfish Interactive

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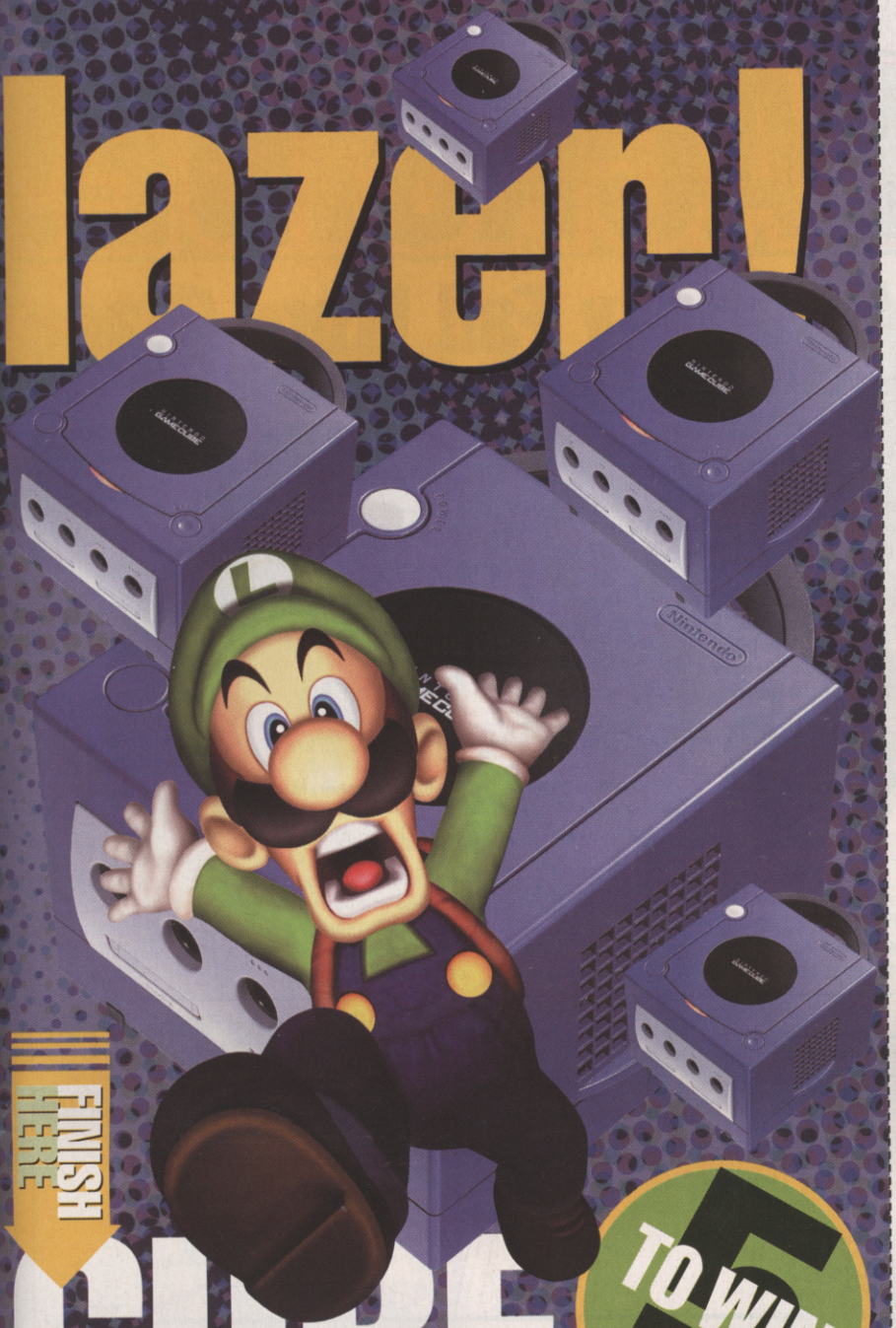
lazer!



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TO WIN 5

GAMECUBE & LUIGI'S MANSION

COURTESY OF AMAZON.CO.UK

GameCube is the sexiest home console ever, and with the UK launch on 3 May approaching, the anticipation for Nintendo's dream machine is reaching boiling point. So if you can't wait to get your clammy mitts on a beautiful 'Cube, look no further because CVG and Amazon.co.uk are giving five of you the chance to win a GameCube and a copy of Luigi's Mansion. But don't panic if you miss out on this stunning giveaway, as you can pre-order GameCubes and all the latest games now (while stocks last), and Amazon.co.uk will deliver everything straight to your door. Mint-ola!

Q. What's the name of the Game Boy that Luigi uses on his quest?
A. Game Boy Advance **B.** Game Boy Horror
C. Game Boy Color **D.** Game Boy Terror

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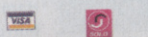

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HUNTER'S BACKSIDE!

The BURNING Question

Every issue CVG attempts to answer the nation's most pressing question

This month: Has the Labour Party failed to deliver many of its election promises?

CVG says: Yes

"I Quit!"

'Return' to Castle Wolfenstein

Fed-up squaddie Lewis Harrison has quit the Army after it failed to give the high levels of excitement provided by his first-person shooting games.

"The army's no Medal Of Honor!" he stormed. "I spent the whole time on the first level, which was, frickin' training! I expected armoured assaults on heavily fortified positions, stealthy night-time incursions, deathmatch games using live ammo and the odd round of Capture The Flag. But what did I get? Marching!"

The Army, as it *should* have been but wasn't

Mr Harrison has previously walked out of jobs as a getaway driver ("all that waiting around"), a skateboarder ("it ain't no Tony Hawk's"), and a Jedi ("God, the meditation. Soooo boring!").

The Army, as it actually appeared to a horrified Harrison

Mario: My Fall From Grace

One-time plumbing games star is Corby vagrant

Videogame superstar Mario has become a homeless Big Issue salesman in Corby, CVG can reveal. The former plumber has been seen drinking cans of Special Brew accompanied by a stray dog he keeps on a bit of string.

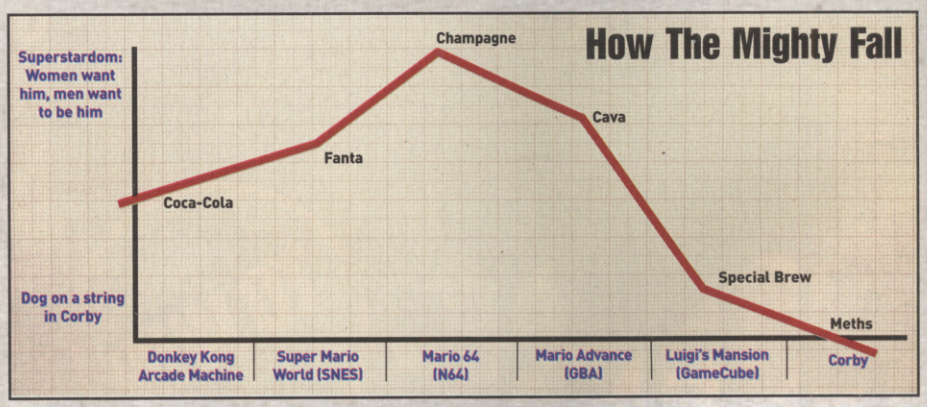
Friends cite career disappointments as the cause of the character's change in lifestyle, which has seen him go from champagne-drinking videogame jetsetter to down-and-out on the unforgiving streets of the Northants town.

Beneath the smiles lurks bitterness

His failure to follow the successes of Mario 64 and Mario Kart with other equally classic games was a blow to the plumber's self-esteem, his friends say. "Mario Party and Mario Tennis were good games, but they weren't 'Mario' games, you know?" said close friend Yoshi. The final straw came when Mario was overlooked for the GameCube launch game in favour of brother Luigi. The news sparked a week's bender, during which Mario visited strip bars, stole a car and sprayed graffiti over Luigi's Mansion.

Changed plumber: Mario as he is today

Asked to comment, the Big Issue salesman asked, "Mario who?" Maybe it was simply a case of mistaken identity...



In Other News

BOY WHO CLAIMS TO HAVE FINISHED GOLDEN SUN "MAY BE LYING", SAY FRIENDS

"It seems a bit strange. None of us has finished it, and we're just as good as him. And whenever we ask him about stuff that happens at the end, he gets all vague," they say.

PSONE OVERHEATING PROBLEMS SOLVED

"We think we've got it licked," claim scientists.

JORDAN TO FIGHT ANGELINA JOLIE FOR LARA CROFT ROLE – BOUT SET FOR AUGUST 2002

When asked to predict the fight's outcome, Jordan said: "There's only one pneumatic archaeologist, and it's me."

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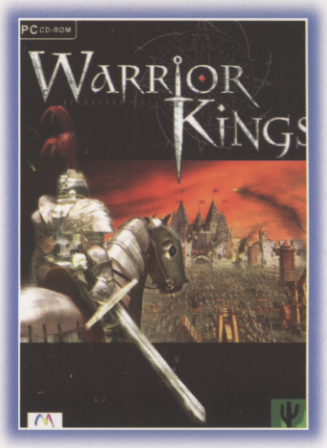

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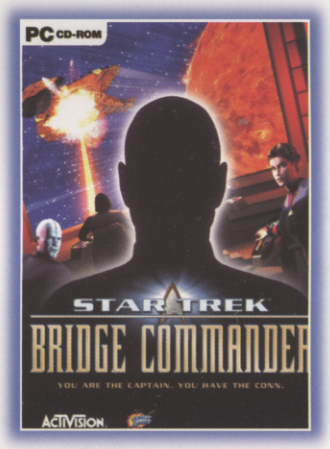

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